

Aamir Mushtaq Cheema draft May 2020

Glasgow University

Memoirs of a foreign;
so called mature student
2008-09

Contents

A Year in Glasgow University - 2008-09	2
University Days	14
I would like to add what I have been writing in my diary at that time	21
<i>14th October 2008.Early Morning.....</i>	24
<i>6th November 08,One Night.....</i>	25
Camphill	33
Week End Nights.....	40
A Night in Police Station	41
Chaplaincy at Turnbull	42
DRIVING Lessons	43
Fresher Week	48
Full Moon.....	51
Camphill	52
Kew	58
Glasgow university library	61
Mariox.....	65
I was taken aback by her sheer honesty	68
Morning Walk In Glasgow.....	76
King Edward The 8th	79
Members of the house of commons	82
Pub	88

Ramadan in Glasgow	96
Gymnasium of university	101
Telephone and Mobiles.....	109
Transport System of Glasgow	112
Opening of Bank Account	119
Transport System of Glasgow	121
Diary of a Bouncer In Glasgow	126
CAMBUS LANG 8TH MAY 09	126

A Year in Glasgow University - 2008-09

I had plan before my retirement from Pakistan Army to have a master degree from UK, the main idea was that since I knew my limitation that I cannot do any business and to get a flying job with my turbulent career despite having an instructor rating was a dicey affair and above all it was a life long fantasy and wish to study in a foreign university ,and it has to be a British and nothing else. In Skardu the speed of computer was very slow yet I by accidentally able to log on to the Cambridge and Oxford universities, I thought why not to aim high and apply there, moreover I was already undergoing a master in Allama Iqbal Open University in history.

I went to Lahore with my family and there by chance I attended a seminar held by a foreign university probably Bolton and I got the first hand idea ,also it became apparent that I can get admission ,the main factor was the money and meeting certain prerequisite qualification

I did started working with earnest zeal in January 2008 for admission and logged on for nights after nights going through the universities and their web pages, I was not yet clear in my mind what to study, the brain said study something to make money like business administration or journalism but heart said ,no go for what you like and that was and is history, any way to cut a long story short I did met representatives of British universities at Rawalpindi and I had all the pre requisites ,like reference latters, photo copies of my degrees and above all sample work ,I came to know that Glasgow university do offer a Master of Letter degree in war studies and from that point onward it became simple, my son was the only one in my close family who supported my idea, we both used to go for early morning jogging and cycling and I would brief him on the pros and cons of my studying in England, my wife was deadly against my going and threatened dire consequences if did went ahead with the project.

It was in March 2008 that I got the unconditional letter from the university of Glasgow for my admission

and it was an e mail ,I only person with whom I could share my joy at that time was Colonel Ahsan Janjua and I did gave him a ring

From that point onward till my departure on 01st October 2008,I was busy in compilation of my aviation history book, I had many pending things to do,like getting leave from army because despite being retired I was still on leave pending retirement,I had to apply for visa and above all I have to arrange the money by selling my plot in Lahore,I also had to go to Skardu because my old passports were there, and I did all this in a very casual manner yet in the end everything went okay

I got the flight on 1st October 2008,it was very heavy on my heart, my family knew that I would be leaving but when they were not sure and I had no intention of telling them and making them sad

The flight took off at 1100 hours local time ,I had a first class seat,I watched the journey towards west, from a historical point,as we moved

14th September 2009, it is 1354 Hours and I am sitting on 8th Floor of Glasgow university library outside its cloudy yet there seems to be no apparent chance of rain but you cannot predict this in Glasgow. On my right is a girl sitting in front of computer doing work apparently she is a new comer as she has got a note book

and on computer there is a map thus she is looking for an accommodation. There are few more students but over all it's a quite day.

I got up in the morning at around eight and then went for jogging and had some time time in the gym apart from swimming, on my way back to my flat on woodland road I stopped at the local butcher not that I had to buy but he was insisting on having a chat, he is from Pakistan born here. We talked about women, meat, and religion and later he narrated some passages from Alchemist novel, from there I walked back, thinking about Rena's letter which had not arrived yet from America. The sun rays were shining, had a bath in cold water as despite my best effort I couldnot make out whets wrong with the boiler. Later on my way down I got hold of postman and there were two letters from my beloved whom I have not seen in last twenty years.

Now I go back to last October when I came here, but before that it will be appropriate to introduce myself as such you won't be able to fully grasp my interpretation of this one year of life. I am 44 years of age, spent almost twenty five years in Pakistan army as aviator and retired in 2008 as a major. I have one son who was fifteen when I came here and a daughter who is twelve and only one wife Stamina who is herself a doctor in army, my father and mother are alive yet they are separated. My father is a retired commercial pilot

himself. I am an atheist by religion and anarchist by political view point although it's difficult to explain both these terms. History is my kind of passion, and I had a degree from an open university in history. For last couple of years I was busy in compiling the history of my corps which is under publishing, before I came I handed over the draft to the publisher The Army Press in Islamabad...

I had been in Europe in 1990 for over three months twice, I had a girl friend in Germany Ingrid whom I had met in Thailand in 1990,I also went to Burma in 1996 for a month travelling on the footsteps of John Masters one of my favourite writer .

Now I am not a rich man by any standard and I have never been able to manage the finances in my life it was courtesy of Pakistan army which gave a piece of land to every officer on retirement.

Why I came here has its roots in that feeling which every retired officer goes, a year before I started thinking about what to do in life, my aim was simple to have fun with the productivity, I assured my self and debated for a long time that after quarter of century of this risky life if I am alive than I must have a good time for a year and there is nothing better than to go to an university. England was the natural choice, oxford and Cambridge did not accepted me's was thinking of education degree and then changed my mind to history.

In my mind it was not just a year in university it was another movie in life video. The best I thought was David lean Ryan's daughter, thus I started looking for old universities ,came across Aberdeen .Finally on one of the education seminar I bumped into the Glasgow university I was not interested in it as in my opinion Glasgow was a big city where as I was looking for a country side or next to sea. But the War Studies was tempting so tempting that it over ruled every thing and I put my application and I was given an unconditional letter.

All along I kept announcing to my family what I intend doing .my son took it seriously and everyday I would give him a picture of what will I be doing in university and why education is so important for all of us otherwise if I don't get this degree ,then all our life we will remain in a situation where we will be competing with the society on materialistic values but education will save us from this agony,salik knowing fully well his father agreed ,wife was a different ball and game, under no circumstances I was to leave, she resorted to centuries old tactics that ranged from cooking to weeping to threatening to shouting to throwing and hurling. For a normal person these acts are very distracting as at any stage either you can be tempted into their charms or be scaled of the consequences but with fifteen years of marriage life under my belt I was determined not to give away. anyway to cut a long story short I arrived at

Glasgow airport on 1st October 2008. But before I move forward when I was leaving my house I left in the hours of darkness, my family was sleeping and next morning was the aid day ,the day for which people from all over the world come back to home, I went to the bakery and bought the food stuff and left in the house, my only fear was that if my wife wakes up then there was no chance that I would be able to get the flight from the airport. My regimental officer Major Jawed was coming from Rawalpindi and we tied up to meet at the bazaar, before that I had shifted my two bags for morning flight to the aviation mess.Jawad reached and we did one final packing and we remained awake till wee hours, he rang one of his friend at Glasgow and despite my all protests told him to receive me on airport with a lure that he is sending him cigarettes.

Squadron vehicle dropped me at the allama iqbal airport, it was an eid day so not much of rush, I had a first class seat. there aws another girl in jeans who was also heading for Glasgow university and we had a coffee together, my first coffee with another lady without fear of my wife in almost a decade..

Flight was comfortable it was after almost a decade or plus that was travelling aging on international route, much has changed the seats were very different then the in-flight entertainment which after half an hour was deathly boring. The aircraft was over the plains of

Multan and I travelled into history with the flight, here at this city Alexander the great was wounded, then came the Great river Indus and ground became deserted, the foothills of the mountains started all barren it lasted for another an hour before I saw a city in the amidst of a mountains which was traversed by the streams from the all corners, I asked air hostess and she was unaware later she went to captain and came back, its Kabul. well the mystery was solved, the moguls' have been coming all along these routes and there was no other way if you descend down from these mountains then to follow the path of the water and there you enter the flat vastness of the Dravidians, the Hindus and moguls' and before them the ghaznavids were always tempted by the richness of the plains. The people living in the plains were no match to these warriors who were mobile and hardy. Aircraft flew on and now I was able to map the central Asia, all similar to the Kabul, mountains and mountains through which runs arteries of life the water and then cities. My mind thought of Mongols the greatest horde of all and down below I saw the Russian steppes but before that were lakes, this steppe is vast in size just opposite to the sub continental plains, it is not flat, it is jagged and deserted, and often I saw habitats which were all isolated with single road entering or leaving them. The food in flight was good, my mind thought of family what they were doing now, at what time they would have realised that I am gone,salik must have checked the room and

would have announced in his peculiar fashion ‘mama papa’s clothes are missing’ another onrush of guilt and to overcome this guilt I tried to read Hitler’s Mein Kamfp, when ever I am in such situation I try to read this book as it is real and I have not understood it in totality yet the life pattern of Fuehrer is always motivating. I had some chat with the girl whose name I came to know is faiza mannan, there was another fellow passenger who was fast asleep, I tried to use the seat but I was not aware of the buttons but I did succeeded. while you are sitting or travelling in first class some how the other one develops a kind of opinion about passengers travelling in economy class, in my case since majority of the life I have travelled in economy and while sitting there I had always harvested communist ideas about the first class. Out side it was still the Russian steppes now I saw some snow top mountains as well, finally I saw sea and then the island of breat Britain, it was 9 hours of flight. Scotland from above look very beautiful, green scarcely populated dotted with lakes and forests, the aircraft banged over the Glasgow and I saw the city which will be my abode for another a year, all I saw was sapphire of churches and mass of buildings yet it looked small. I am always scared despite twenty years in aviation whenever an aircraft approaches landings, there is a thought that runs in my mind, in case if the captain has given the controls to co-pilot for landing and that sucker mess up this one, after a prolong float the wheels touched the

ground and I was relax after almost a year of tension. the airport was small one and finally I was standing in the queue for entry stamp, I still had that premonition that Murphy law can work here, I rattle my mind and got one scary signal in case if there is any trace of any hash or that thing after all bag or bags are years old. I had two bags not the proper one but long canvas holdall in which I had a variety of clothes ranging from Great Coat to khaddar kames shalwar,I generally try to adhere top military academy's dress code yet I had much too many. On the custom desk there were three people one male who was British another Sikh and third a white female/I again try to work my mind as to which one will be better, Sikh was the least favourable for the reason that one lesson which I have learnt is that own people are more dangerous ,and out of two I would had preferred the female but I had no option and I was called ,I had to get some documents from the bag and while getting them the Mien Kemp dropped out ,well the gentleman asked one odd question and I was given the entry stamp.

I walked and at the railing I saw one gentleman and he waved at me, his name was Usman, and I had bought two cartons of cigarettes for him in flight. We walked out and lit a fag, I saw a woman walking past me in her shorts that was the first interaction.

Usman took me first to the university area; the first hour in any foreign city is fascinating especially once you

have travelled not countries but civilisation. There was a Global positioning system {GPS} in the car which was a new thing for me, you just feed the data and car directs to you. The university area was good, now my mind was working in Pakistani style, I thought that office would be open and there must be someone to guide you but first I was almost a week late and that's not how it works, how ever after having a look at the sports ground I was impressed, it was a far cry from the first day when I entered the military academy twenty five years ago.usman's house was in suburbs, a neat and clean house, it started raining, he offered me to stay in his house but I politely declined it ,he then found one room for me in a hotel near university area, he made the payment through his card online, this again was new for me as we seldom use it for online payment in Pakistan for the fear of being ripped, the room cost £30 per night. I had apart from the draft for the fees which was 9000£ and another draft of 6000£ also had 3300£ in cash in my pocket.usman dropped me at the Botanic Garden hotel on great western road, the car couldnot be parked in front of the hotel thus in that chilly and rainy weather I had to carry these heavy bags and I curse myself for this and also remembered the aviation mess Rawalpindi where by this time some one would have come and carry my bags.

There was a petite Indian girl who was all alone and managing the desk, there was no hassle of waiters in the

hotel which I expected, she checked the record and informed me that my payment has not been made so I had to pay another £30, she also informed me that my room is on the top floor, I carried these heavy bags alone by one to the top floor. On the last trip to pick the bag I saw two Indian students carrying their bags for exit, they informed me that they have found an accommodation in the city and are moving out, there was another Greek student who had also just arrived and was extremely worried about his accommodation, I gave him a soothing talk which meant ‘relax’. After reaching my room I had a look at the window and rest of the room, it was small room, one small TV and kettle for making tea. I just lay down on the bed and thought of the family, calculated the time difference and realised they must have gone to sleep if at all they could sleep, but I was confident that Samina will handle the situation, Salik would be ok, Azadeh not much of a problem, yet a whole one year is no small matter. In these thoughts I changed and went down and walked aimlessly towards one side and first shop was the pub and I entered in it and ordered a beer, there were two bar tenders in short clothes, I asked about smoking restrictions and was promptly told that ‘you cannot smoke you have to go out side for it’. The first sip of chilled beer and all the idiotic thoughts started vanishing, I assured my conscious’ people die also, look after Riaz Azeem, officers go on for war also , don’t be sissy, relax and enjoy’. Later I had a pizza in the grillious

restaurant which was located next door bought few packets of chips and went back to my room and slept.

University Days

I have never attended a regular university in my forty three years of life although I had been and still is a student of an open university in Pakistan and have been attending the classes of them for last three years and also I have been going occasionally to universities there but that was seldom for studies and now I am here in Glasgow university for last six months and this is my experience of this time.

On the very first day I was more concerned about my accommodation than any thing else yet I had to follow the steps to be enrolled in the university.I first went to 9 university garden where department of history is located ,this I did from asking the students and it was easy to reach there,I reached the office of Christelle ,I had been in touch with her on net as she was the co-ordinater of the course yet I had no idea how she looks and how old she is ,I did ask her on net to clarify her sex and all she had replied was that I should call her christell.Her office was at the top of almost hundred steps ,it was a fresh experience to meet a person with whom I was in communication on net,a mid thirty woman ,French and simple in nature.She guided me about the course and that's all,she told me that class is at 1500 hours in room

208 ,No 2 University gardens, and for next six months this was my abode. She also gave me a hand out which had the programme for next three months ,all classes on Tuesday and Thursdays and all at 1500-1700 hours.

I then walked to the no 2 university gardens, infact it all is one series of buildings almost hundred years old. I entered the building with anticipation, first I met Dr Simon Ball the head of department, he generally welcomed me and that was all, he did not offered any help in finding accommodation for me and neither he offered any cup of tea and neither engaged in any lengthy talk. This was something a cultural shock, in my envoirnments it was supposed to be other way round, but as an alien I observed all this and enjoyed. It was Thursday the 2nd of October and I had already missed three classes and this was the fourth in series , a presentation on Machiavelli's Art Of War in 10 university gardens room no 9. I entered the class with lot of anticipation, how are the classes going to be, how they are going to teach, who will be my class fellows and so on. After all I have paid a heavy price both financially and emotionally to be here in the university.

My class fellows were a mix breed of students, none paid any attention to me or said any word of welcome or inquire who I am or from where I come from, I made an effort and went to every one shook hands and introduced myself , yet they were cold in response. Chad was from

USA so was Kelly a blonde and heavy girl,Chohan from HongKong although he posses USA nationality,Lawrence from Ireland,Dimitri from Grecce,Matti from Finland,Mattew from England,Celine from Germany and that's all.Hall had few chairs ,a black board and computer,it was cold but warm.Lawrence gave the presentation on Machiavelli and professor Sam Cohn was in attendance.In simple words I was disappointed with the standard of presentation,I had been giving and attendind presentations for last twenty five years and do expect certain standards ,but it was new for me,it was too informal in nature,all clad in jeans.I mentally compared to my military classes and found it below par but then I consoled my mind that this is western university and here how it works.I did ask the first question and started a debate and soon other joins in,my point was regarding the concept of militia and mercenary armies which Machavalli was against,I have read the book before coming thus I had a fair knowledge about what I was talking about.The professor did not like my arguments and I could feel a certain hostility in him.Same feeling was conveyed by the celine after the class.As soon as the class finished everyone simply got up and walked out,none bothering about the lights to be switched off or to say hello to each other.

This was my first day in the university but with the passage of time I understood the system and how it works.

The pattern of study was that professor would deliver the lecture on Tuesday for two hours and then on Thursday one of the student would give presentation called seminar for two hours. The next lecture on 7th October was on Clausewitz by professor Hew Strachan. I have been reading and listening about Clausewitz for almost a quarter of century and never really understood about him other than ‘War is an extension of policy’ and I really looked forward to this lecture in earnest. Hew Strachan gave the looks of a professor and for two hours we talked about Clausewitz, the teaching method was not like what I was used to rather it was more of discussion in a friendly manner, I think that I was the only one in class who had read about Clausewitz before and I quoted frequently, I admit that I thought that Strachan does not know about much of Clausewitz and he smilingly listened to me as well, it was only later that I came to know about him, he has written many books about war and strategy and that I think was his beauty that he did not show or imposed or contradict my feelings about him in the class. But it was a treat to listen to him about Clausewitz.

Next was Early Modern Warfare, then Europe’s Small warfare, Mahan and Sea power, small arms and their control, Deep Soviet Battle, evolution of European warfare, Douhet and then a visit to national museum at Edinburgh. I gave two seminars on Mahan and Douhet and wrote an essay on Airpower as well

The basic difference between what I have been studying and what I was learning now lies in the fact that here there was no supervision ,it was self discipline and self study.No fear of exams or grading.I bought books on mahan and Douhet and realised that books are expensive to buy here ,I also bought few more books from a book fair that was held in Botanic Garden,I also had brought few books with me from Pakistan as well.All classes were held in the rooms of the professors,which were quite big ,had a central table few chairs and shelves full of books,all the teachers were Phds in relevant subjects.We would have a kind of tea break after an hour and could take tea or coffee while in the class and so would be the teacher.No black boards or slides.My routine would be to get up late in the morning and then read Clausewitz,Douhet,Mahan,Liddell Hart,Guderian and so on,make lunch for myself and on given days arrived at the university gardens,sit outside them ,smoke my pipe watch the students go by and observe them ,attend the class and then again sit outside in cold and smoke the pipe and agin watch the students of all ages,races,colour and nationality and sex.It was a great feeling and it became my habit and almost a ritual to follow the routine.weather became colder and colder and darker and darker.In between there were few seminars conducted by the department on various themes as well in which the best thing was the free wine served at the

end of the seminar,I made many friends rather acquaintances in the process.

The teachers were a cross section of society,for instance Dr O Brien is an American who had done his Phd from Cambridge in Naval warfare ,he always dressed up in jeans but was more open than anybody else,he was the one who took the whole class for drinks after his lecture to the Heather Research Club,Dr Alex Marshall who has done his Phd in Russian warfare from Moscow University,he is youngest of all and has got a chess on his table,which I used to play on every class,one move per lecture,Dr Simon Ball who again has got Phd in British defence Policy.Within the class there was no obvious warmth for others,all remained within themselves.Kelly never spoke a word in the whole tenure other than her seminar papers,Lawrence always came up with right wing ideas,Mattew would indulge in a question for which apparently there was never any answer,Matti always came in track suit because he would come straight from the Rugby practice,Dimitri was always concerned about the cyber warfare and as for me I would always have a soft corner for Adolf Hitler ,Mongols and Joseph Stalin.

My observation about the class was that they have little idea about Asian warfare especially about the Mongols and secondly they are biased about the German warmachine and are reluctant to talk about the WW2

from an independent point of view ,same hold true for teachers and almost all the guest speakers,Nazism was a taboo word,nothing good can be attributed to them or to Russians.I took full liberty of my being an asian and would always stressed that ‘from neutral point of warfare one must admire Germans and hitler’ I did raised quite a few eye brows by asking questions and defending them with examples.I understood that Europe remained engaged in warfare mainly on religious aspects,British talk about morality of their actions in WW2 but remain quiet on the brutality of their warfare especially the strategic bombing .In a way I felt homely because this is how we treat history back home when talking about Hindus and Whites. Religion is another taboo which was seldom discuss lest anyone gets offended ,however I put the class at ease by myself criticising religion purely from historical pattern.The course bias was towards the European warfare and I did raise this point with Dr Simon Ball and with others highlighting the Mongols,Muslims,SunTu Zu and others and Simon did admit this draw back.

The students in the university comes from all over the world and sitting outside and smoking pipe I would watch them.They all had something peculiar and common,almost everyone had an I-Pod and they would walk with ear phones ,a bag hanging alongside,a faded or torn jeans,sneakers,a mug cap.The girls had different style,some would have heavy make up and almost all

wore high length cow boy boots,which I never saw any male putting on.Girls generally tended to move with girls yet many would walk hand in hand with boys.But by and large I found them conservative.Blacks would move with blacks,Asians amongst Asians and Europeans among Europeans ,exceptions are always there but as a general rule it was the pattern,same holds true for Chinese as well.The Malaysians would always wore head scarves.all were polite and never even once I saw any one shouting or abusing.

I would like to add what I have been writing in my diary at that time

4th October 2008.

Today is my fourth day and right now I am thinking about my wife and children,I am thinking that tomorrow at 0600 hours ,samina would get up and would make Salik ready for school then she would go with him to the bus stop and then she will come back and wake azadeh up and get herself ready and go to office,then she will pick azadeh up from school and it can take quite a time then she will prepare the food and wait for Salik... thinking all this my conscious is pinching me that I have left all of them just for my own selfish sake,I am alone in my room now and thinking that I should go to Byres Road and buy some utensils for cooking,had samina been here she would have done that,now I am far from her and now I realise how good

she was I have forgotten all her cruelties and frankly none in this whole city can match her beauty

Monday 6th October 08, For whole rather half day I have been lying in my bed,outside its drizzling,read Clausewitz and lidel hart,rang tiger and Jawwad.thinking of salik and azadeh their voices are ringing in my mind,remembering samina,I rang salik and azadeh and listen to their hard talks.they are right and justified in their complaints.Went to Botanic garden and sat alone on a bench and thought of past,Bought few utensils.Its a strange thing the bill here is in 10-15 figures had it been my own country it would have been in hundreds or thousands.The british also takes ages in buying a thing,here nothing is free not even a shopping bag,my whole geography revolves around this Byres road.I went to a shop own by a Pakistani from Mirpur then to a shop own by a rana from Faisalabad,I tried to find some work but to no avail.Its weird I cannot find a bottle of ink in this city and neither can I find safety blades.After coming back I made food for myself,these were pieces of meat which I fried.Thai girl Indy also made food for herself and we both talk about our countries,she seems to be a very disciplined girl in kitchen just like Samina.Its 2200 hours and boys and girls are studying,cars are coming and going and my feet are aching.

8th October 08.

Today he got up early, now he gets up early every day, why he does not know but his eyes open early, through the curtain he looked outside to judge the time but failsmhere he cannot hear the birds singing and neither can he hear the dogs barking but whenever his eyes opened it's the face of his wife and children that comes up and he knows that if he lie down long on the bed then these memories will keep on haunting him thus he put on shorts and shoes and then smoke a cigareete in toilet and then walk down the stairs judging the weather simultaneously, outside he started jogging slowly, he is the only person in this complex who gets up so early and go for jogging, As he jog he took a right turn this is a rich people area, after hundred yards there is a school and he could see mothers dropping their children, it was quite early definitely these mothers had to go for work therefore they are dropping these kids so early, little girls were carrying bags and some bags were carried by the mothers, he crossed the road and entered the Botanic garden, first he saw two old English men who were walking with their dogs, he kept on jogging the road was upslope thus soon he felt his breath shortening but he kept running, fresh air, grass, trees , silence , wet weather all looked good to him and finally he reached the mid of park and sat quietly on a bench, An English man was standing in the mid of the park with his two dogs , the man signalled to him and out of curiosity he walked towards him, first the dogs greeted him and then the man

who was in mid forties, who simply said 'my mother has expired four days ago and I am sad and depressed' he also got sad because mother is mother no matter whose, he offered him brandy which he declined to drink, the man told him about his children, his eldest son was twenty eight and he also told him about his deceased mother, she was only eighteen when he was born. All this made him sad and he thought about his own mother and with these thoughts he came back to his room.

He made breakfast for himself and then went down to smoke a cigarette and then came back and slept. At Noon he got up and took time in deciding what to wear, it was a daily problem for him, what to wear, in case if you have more clothes than you can understand his dilemma, today he wore blue blazer and then thought which cap to wear, he is fond of wearing caps, and he has three -four caps, finally he settled on his old regimental cap.

14th October 2008. Early Morning

I think I get up very early in the morning, I go to park for walk, when I leave this building almost all are asleep or getting ready, weather is always cold and wet, outside one odd person is on road. all cars have mist on them, there is hardly anyone in the park also and after half an hour when I come back then few students are going to university, oh I forgot to mention in the morning everyone is walking with dog. I do admit that I only say good morning to ladies and when they reply with their

soft tone ,my soul gets a soothing impact,I also admit that I have yet to say good morning to any black person,some students also say good morning to me but they all are from Nigeria ,at times one odd girl also say good morning but I never take anything wrong out of it,although had I been in Pakistan then I should have fallen in love with her .

6th November 08,One Night

There is a difference between day and night,morning brings message of hope where as the night carrys load of whole day with lot of questions and querries and tonight is one such night.right now Isabella the german girl is cooking food{frying eggs} and also telling me about her sister and I am telling her about the good points of my wife.

Now I am sitting in the common room and almost all the boys are playing pool and table tennis,if I am not wrong we all are from third world,all whites have gone to club

Pub is an English tradition a place where people go for drink,at least this is what I perceived,there are no pubs in my country.I remember that there used to be a debate among learned officers about what is the difference between pub abd bar and it was ecided and verdict given that pub serves food and bar doesnot.I had

been to few pubs and bars in my life before coming to Glasgow,I remember the one bar in New York city which had a nude dance and than I had few drinks in Café Hard rock in London in early ninties but I really don't consider them as traditional pubs.My interaction with pub started in Glasgow in October 2008 and now after six months of being a regular patron of 'Oran Mor' I feel I can write something about pubs and this culture.I admit that I havenot visited any other pub in this period ,well to be honest I had but it was with my university fellows for one odd night and that itself explains the pub culture,you go to one pub and than you stick to it such is the magic of pub.

It was 31st October 2008 the Haloween night when I almost out of nostalgia decided to go out from my room in queen Margaret residence a university accommodation on Bellshaugh court in west end of city.The reason was that almost two decades ago I had a magical affair on this night in New York and always cherished that thus it was to commemorate that feeling which compeled me to walk out.I knew no place where to go,I had seen this church type building almost daily while going to and fro to university and I did inquire from the security personnal posted out 'what is this? And he with a smile said why don't you have a look inside.and I peep inside and found it to be a place of intoxication in liquids.The place is a medieval church and had a overimposing interior ,I with my little student budget did not venture in

and walk away but with a vow that I one day I will go inside.Thus on that Haloween night I gathered the courage and walk.I had no costume other than my military great coat,shoes and jersey all first or second great war vintage thus ideal to ward off the icy weather of Scotland,I put fifty quid in my pocket and thought at least I would be able to have a drink.

Very few people can understand how much mental courage it requires to enter an alien place like a pub,on the one kilometre walk I gave assurance to myself that nothing is going to happen,after all you have walked alone in Burmaese jungles at night on the footsteps of Major John Masters yet my legs trembled for a last time before I enter the door after climbing the gothic steps .Nothing on this gods earth would have prepared me for the scene that I witness in those first few moments,there were witches,Draculas,sheihks,fathers,nuns,pirates,priests,brid es,barbarians,and host of other costumes,there was a noise and laughter.I solemnly walked among this crowd towards the counter not even knowing what to order other than beer.After first few moments I felt relaxed and easy,I could feel the stares of people but they were not menacing rather curious and friendly,the cost of one pint of beer was far far less than my expectations.as I turned around I found a pirate who smilingly put his hand forward and said welcome,I shook his hand and said cheers.Amidst this crowd we could hardly talk but he

invited me to his table where already there were five or six peoples were sitting it was next to fireplace, and from that day onward I always sat there. That was a magical night, laughter and jokes, the people after learning that I am a student and my past background did not allowed me to buy another drink and offered one after the other. I do remember that since smoking is not allowed inside so I went out to smoke my pipe and met a host of other characters, the two I recall were university students and one of them was too good in card tricks almost unbelievable, I left at morning, I think I was the last one to leave the premises, I sat for an hour with Lady Godiva and her lover or lovers.

I went again after two days and found it to absolutely normal, I quietly had a pint and left. My next venture into the pub was with mariox, it was probably 3rd December and after having coffee with her at ashton Lane I invited her for a drink. I had met her only two days ago and was not sure where to go thus I entered Oran mor, she had been here before.

From that day onward I went through a roller coaster of emotions in this pub, I had some of my life best nights in this place. I have laugh, sang, dance, discussed Clausewitz, world wars, cricket, Oscar wilde and so forth needless to say I have shed few internal tears on the way. I have seen snow falling outside through its hundred years old windows with fire place on, I have seen couples

laughing and crying, people hugging and at times leaving tables without looking back towards their mates.

The more time I spend there the more I felt in love with this place.

What is a pub? Its not just an eating place neither it's a place to get intoxicated with liquor, it's a part of life, you can have coffee, orange juice or food, anything you like. You can sit alone you can read you can sort out your emotional and financial quagmire as well. It is what Mess is to army life.

I became a regular with Mariox, we will sit in the corner and she will tell me about her experience of working in pubs when she was young, she would invariably get into talk with anyone and so would others to me or us. I started noticing there are few regular people who would always be there and I did develop an acquaintance with them. On 13th December 2008, I walked into the pub after handing over my end term essay to the Christelle in University and enroute I talked to my mother back home and its always a good feeling after hearing her voice, I would have loved to talk to my kins as well but they were and still are In War with me for coming here, anyway as I walked in it was 1700 hours and I first sat on a stool then on a table but since it had an uneven balance which dripped the beer thus I sat on a table next to entrance and waited for Mariox, when she came I rose and went to counter to get drinks and then I

remembered that I had a diary for her in my bag and as I look back my bag was not there,I searched it under the table infact everywhere but it was not there,I asked the bar tender Garaham and he had no idea,I ran out but to no avail.I knew it that it has been stolen but my mind simply couldnot accept this fact that in this world any one can steal my bag.I had an inner laugh I normally do it when ever this kind of thing happens,that bag had a history,it was a hand made leather satchel, crafted by Shams Saddler in Rawalpindi in Pakistan who is in this field for last hundred years. I as a lieutenant would pass in front of his old shop with wooden door{It has not changed} and admire his craftman ship but never had enough spare money to indulge in this luxury of buying the bags. Years passed by and I would visit him when ever I was in town and at times purchased belts or watch straps but never the bag yet I would always spend hours in touching these bags ,to cut a long story short ,hours before I left my country I told my regimental officer Major Jawad to buy that bag and he did and now it was gone forever,on top of that on that very day Mariox also told me that she doesnot want to see me anymore.Thus I was at loss what to mourn more.I was also not sure about the behaviour of the pub about this loss of bag,are they going to accept that my bag was stolen from this place ,in majority of the cases which I have heard and seen in world a place like this doesnot admit,even in my own country the first reaction would have been like this

'sorry mate,are you sure you walk in with the bag....probably you had few drinks more than normal and now you cannot even remember that you walk in with bag or not...we never had anything like this here before...someone must have joke with you...or I think you are trying to pull a fast one on us'. It was with these feelings that I told Graham that my bag has been stolen and that's all.Soon the manager came and said sorry for this and explained that some gang does these things and I could feel a genuine sympathy ,like a bush fire it was on everyone's lips,Aamir bag has been stolen.Next day I went to Oran Mor and inquired about the bag but no success ,I did ask them that if I report to police I hope they wont have any objection,again it was in my mind that almost all establishment doesnot like getting involved with police.My interior motive was to understand how this society and police works and with that theme I was working.Pub had no objection and neither there was any change in their behaviour towards me,they did not consider me a load now and I was feeling guilty that due to my casual behaviour I had put them into trouble.

The interaction with police was another strange aspect.I saw two police men walking and they were unarmed and I catch them up near my university after a day or so,the reason for this delay was that I never thought that police would be interested in a bag that has been stolen from a pub and probably they would say the

same thing ‘First tell us how many pints you had before you realised that you have lost your bag?’ and then I thought they will say ‘ok come with us to the pub and then in the pub they will have free drinks as well’ these and all weird ideas were coming to my mind basing upon the experience which I had in my country,I was unable to suppress the inner smile on thinking how the police back home would have reacted.The two jhonnies took detail very seriously on a black book and said ‘don’t worry we will look into this and we will inform you’. While walking away I said to myself ,its not a bad deal for the loss of a bag atleast you have experienced how this police system works.

Now all the people I knew in the pub and I knew very few, were concerned about the bag,I would be stopped on Byres Road by someone and he would console with me and same was the case in the pub,I felt even embarrass.Yes the police did went to pub ,I was told by the mangaer and in a polite way.Any how I did found the bag,the thieves left it in a bank on Byres Road and bank did inform the number which was there in the bag,all I lost were two pair of gloves.

Coming back to pub,it was new year eve and there were tickets for entry as well ,I forgot to mention that I spend my Christmas eve in the pub and it was fun.On new year eve I planned to get two tickets ,one for Mariox and one for myself,like always I got late and

while I was talking to Graham for tickets and he politely said ‘its all sold out’ I was dishearted and turned away to walk,one distinguish looking man whom I couldnot place in terms of what his position in the bar is ,simply said ‘graham give him two tickets’ and then smilingly signed it and said to me ‘iam sorry about your bag’ I told him that I have found the bag ,but he insisted.

I was stunned,why he had given me two tickets,what I have been always perceiving is that there is no such thing as free lunch in west,yet this man has ben kind .Well I enjoyed the night and later learnt that man was Collin the owner of the pub and that fact was revealed only last week because I often saw him in jeans working outside with other workers as well.Thus pub can be an institution in learning the social values of this culture.

Pub has rules albeit unwritten ones,as long as you are not creating discomfort to the others you are welcome,now I can talk or write about this pub and this may not be true for others.

Camphill

I am working as a patrol guard in this area since December 15th and today is 15th February ,I normally come here on week end and at times I have been doing the job in between also,my duty starts at 1700 and finishes at 0200

It is a residential area in the south of Glasgow city next to Queens Park on lexinton avenue,it consist of around five hundred families living in flats.the flats are around twenty years old they are made of brick but not painted or plastered,only two blocks are more than three floors rest all are generally double storeyed

Area is bounded on its one side by a main road and on its front is a small road and behind is another small road but there is a fence there and on last side there is another block of flats

Somebody asked me once ,are they rich people? And my answer was in England you are either rich or poor,so these people are not poor but yet they are not rich as well,if cars are the datum level to gauge any body's wealth then these are a mixtures of people,there are BMW,Mercedez,ford fiesta,Suzuki alto,Skoda, and few plumbing vans as well

The whole complex is divided into almost twelve blocks named as Bute court,Alisa,Lethington,Mooray,Gloucester and so on,they are three roads that leads into this complex from the front and a path way as well.The demography of the people is majority white,very few Asians and even fewer east Europeans although they are difficult to judge in that way.The age group of people is also mixed young ,middle age and old and some are very old,I will come to that fact later,most are families,there are children as well

but as there number is low in overall city thus they are not in big numbers and neither are teenagers, the rae is not very huge but neither it is amall, there is one medium size rather small park in the middle and there are almost small lawn in front of every block, trees are in numbers, flats are small maybe one to two bed , a kitchen a lounge a store and and a toilet, lifts are there in only two blocks, it generally takes me at a very leisurely pace to complete one round in zig zag manner around forty minutes

Shall I start from beginning or from present, well its 1950 15th February now and I am waiting for police to come because one of the garage door was opened when I came here at 1700 hours and the garages are separated from others with a thick fly proofing and I duly informed my supervisor about this and now he is here and we both are waiting for the police to come, this is the first time that I am waiting for police other wise nothing has ever happened at least in my duty, yes last week two window glasses were broken in the ground floor flats and I did not took notice, however the system here works in a different manner

The company for which I work AAA security has a contract for providing security to this premises and is hired by the people of these flats, the guard comes here everyday from 1700-0200 hours and in day time there is a caretaker as well, not that it is a crime infested area

rather people are generally more scared than they should be, but its their preogotive

On my first day I was shown the area by the supervisor who is a Indian ,student rather an engineer and working now as supervisor ,there are fourteen pointsmand guarding is electronic,I have one electric device called Co=Guard,its hand hekd and I have to touch it with these fourteen points that are spread all over the cpmplex,the touching points are about a mobile phone size and placed on trees and walls,the supervisor took me around and showed it,I couldnot remember all of them and their location,between each complete patrol and next one there is a break of twenty minutes and I have a room with heater ,radio and tea maker,company also gave a mobile which has to be in pocket while on patrol

My very first night was spend in locating the points,I was able to remember about nine points and the rest I had a general idea like trees,hedges and and a fence.I practically searched touched and scanned every tree and was able to locate three more still two more were left which I found next night,I read the instructions which were in guard room,there was a mark difference in what I had been groomed in army and what was here.In army you can always have an excuse and someone else to blame and most importantly there is always someone to cover you up and equally important ,someone to let you down as well but is was pure commercial,I am being

paid in terms of hours and there is specified things that I have to perform,nothing more nothing less,I cannot say today it is snowing so I can have five minutes more break and neither anyone expects me to stay even a minute more than specified even if I sense danger

It was a cold night and I remember my mother because had she known this fact that her only son is on patrol on a cold night I am sure she would not have taken a blanket herself also ,such is her love and on the other hand my wife would have prayed for more rain and cold ,just to get even with me

When I walked on patrol I had no feeling for the people who were living in the flats,it was weird because never in my life had I been void of feeling while on duty,at least the regimental pride was always there if nothing else,but here all I had was my personal pride,I remember the time when I first went out to check a guard on my first day in army in Sargodha almost quarter of century before and with same mental feeling I walked,I was a duty officer checking the guards in a cantonment and that's all.The major difference was that these guards were electronic ,I cannot ask them 'how is your morale,how is your family young man,when did you last went on leave,what you had in dinner, I hope sergeant major isnot that tough on you and neither could they complain about the food,the heating arrangements,the number of duties or similar suggestion,I started enjoying

the duty as it provided me time to think of my past, moreover I considered myself lucky as now I had the opportunity to see and observe the locals from close range, I can stare at a flat, I can stand at the crossing for as much time as I like I can walk at the backyard of the flats and I have no hesitation to admit that I enjoyed this little power in an alien land

I kept a diary with me and in those twenty minutes of break I would write what I felt.

I was reading Commandant of Auschwitz an autobiography and found it absorbing thus on patrol I would mentally think about that, I met an old English lady of around seventy plus and she asked me ‘are you our new guard and I replied affirmative and she answered ‘people say you are good. My morale went sky rocketing

I had one problem and that was I did not know where is the toilet, neither Nomal showed me any one and neither I asked him about this, but now the cold along with couples of tea and I had an urge to pee but where, on my top there was a birthday party going on and from voices I could make out that it of a woman and not that of a child, moreover the ladies would stand in the window to smoke, had it be Pakistan I would not have felt any major problem but here in Scotland I knew from my course on security that it is an offense to pee in open and secondly the company would not have liked it a bit to know that I was peeing in open but I had to pee, thus there is a dark

patch about thirty meters from the guard room and grassy as well so I walked as I am there to see the area and then I opened the zip and peed, but it got on my mind as to what will happen if have upset stomach, I am casual by nature and never really bothered about this aspect of life but here it was a different ball and game

The second major aspect was that I had bought a tin of corned beef and as I tried to open it I cursed Brazilian because it went through my hand like a knife, I had bleeding which seemed unstoppable, luckily I had a white handerchief and wrapped it around but it hardly worked

The night went on and I regularly patrolled, it was pre Christmas time and many of the houses were decorated with trees and others had few lights, now from an observer point of view the question which I debated in my patrol was, why there are some having lights and others not, any kind of question can arise in a guard's mind and this decorations of the flats remained my constant point of focus, I will with the passage of time observed certain more houses getting trees but overall their number was much less,

The other lesson which I learnt on that night was the value of money, it's not easy to earn money, probably this was the first time in my life that I was earning money through hard work, I don't consider army life as hard work it was fun and money was never a part of army life

but here life revolves around money and it helped me in understanding certain cultural aspects,

Week End Nights

For long the concept of weekend is associated with west,in army life and in civil life in Pakistan it was always stressed that ‘look at whites they work all week and enjoy on weekends’ what does it implies,I can throw some light purely from what I have seen students and how I saw as a working person and how I myself went through it.

There are clubs almost on every corner along with pubs and university it self has two clubs as well

The week end starts from Friday afternoon and lasts till Sunday night,a normal working pattern is from almost seven in morning till five in evening and I have seen in winter how people starts early in morning and virtually ends late in dark,one point that I want to highlight here is that I seldom saw anyone working late after working hours ,here all work is paid in terms of hours thus every minute becomes countable.The professors in university seldom go teaching beyond the prescribed two hours of class or in my case beyond 1700 hours,there was no such thing ‘see me after the class ‘ ‘or I will explain you after the class’ neither in administrative departments I saw

anyone gossiping or sitting idle,not even in pubs.And after work almost everyone can be seen walking towards their homes through underground or buses or through their own transport.majority would be seen carrying heavy shopping bags and that includes old ladies and men as well,The Glasgow or this west end is a hilly area thus it is constant up and down walk.The students themselves are busy in studies almost all week thus Friday night is a welcome break.

In Queen Margaret residence from my window I would see girls getting ready for the party,they could be seen rushing to various room sprobably discussing what to wear etc etc and at nine o clock ,they all dressed in fancy clothes which irrespective of how cold the weather is ,always flashy and bright with high sandals.If it is raining than they would call taxi and giggling would jump into that,on other days some would walk and other would go by taxi.

Within the club, well I have visited Oran Mor night club a few times thus I can say from that experience,the club opens its doors at 2300 hours and almost same is pattern in all clubs with little variation.There is an entrance fee which in case of Oran Mor is eight pounds and again it varies in all other for instance Viper has free entry till ten hundred hours and than six pounds after that,university clubs Hive has two pounds .

A Night in Police Station

Chaplaincy at Turnbull

I first went to catholic chaplaincy on easter night with martin speilvogel.I was at his flat smoking ganja with Ashoy when martin said that he is going to chaplaincy for easter service, I had been going to the protestant church on university avenue thus martin invited me ,but after watching us smoking for an hour he changed his mind and was reluctant in taking me along,I finally said to him that any one can go there and I am going ,I was in track suit and never wanted to attend the service in this dress but there was no option,myself and Martin we both went there,the doors were closed but as I pushed the door I found it open so I tucked in where as martin remained outside and came in after an hour.

Now you have to be stoned to fully comprehend what I saw ,coming from the flat walking along the street where there were cars,people ,pubs,dogs,street lights,traffic lights,girls,boys and so on and discussing second world war with Martin,now what I see is a hall lit with candle lights,where at the altar are three people clad in medieval dress,having some brass utensils in their hand which they were waving ,there were few choir girls standing on one side of the hall and singing some psalms in their beautiful voice,there was a live band as well,I was intoxicated in the scene,what the hell is going on,how can any one in twenty first century can believe that few

drops of water can purify their soul,I saw students who were attending Phds in physics and biology and here they were sitting with blank faces with fear in their eyes,I saw little toddlers sitting enchanted with their mothers and in certain cases grand mothers holding them ,patting them and whispering in their ears not to make any noise.I was sitting in the last row,I was peacefull because although I ghad been attending the churches in Pakistan ,rather I went to the church with my family on last Christmas in Lahore ,yet in Pakistan I always had a fear of a bomb attack or someone all of a sudden opening the door and firing a burst of kalashinkov,these hallucinations do occur once you are high on grass.being an atheist I saw the proceedings from a historical and philosophical angle,I tried to read the mind of the people,here was the cream of western civilisation the most educated most advanced people and yet when it comes to beliefs they were as primitive as any one on this god's earth,I could not distinguish them from the illiterate people of my native village who belives that when whirlwind moves then it's a jinn who is moving ,who donot travel at night lest they are attacked by the withches and where old grannies still tell the young kids that if it so happen then donot look back or you will turn into a stone.

DRIVING Lessons

In england it seems that driving licence is every thing ,you need not any identification other than that.I am driving for last twenty five years and never had any accident other tha some close shaves.now while walking on Byres Road and pondering over the general financial situation of mine and the world I realised that only way out is to drive a taxi here as it seems like a clean and neat job but first I need a driving licence.In my opinion it was not a big deal.

In my casual manner I started asking questions from my flat mate who had a car and he informed to check it on web,all the information was there but my passport was with SIA so I couldnot apply finally one day I went to the Driving vehicle licensing Authority,it was end April.the office was located on George Street,I had a map and it was not difficult to locate still I lost the way.I had recently bought a GPS after my repeated such follies and it was its first practical application,it worked well as it took me close to the address.now back home the procedure is quite different.I had my first driving licence after almost six years of driving ,I had a military driving licence but civil I never had one because I never desired one ,the one I got was in sukkur where I had just gone to the police office and had a cup of tea and handed over my picture which they trimmed it and aftera week some one went there and picked up the licence.the second licence which I got was a couple of years ago when they made it like a card and it took me almost fortnight of

pondering and another to get it although office was just four hundred yards away from my messs.I still remember how frustrated I was when I had to go to the post office to deposit the amount.The reason of narrating all this is to tell you that I am always allergic to the paper work.

In the office it was a small que and after some time my turn came,I sat on a chair and on the otyher side of the window was a woman whoaccepted my forms,it could have been done through the post office but kasif told me it will save time and I was anxious to get the licence.After a week I received a letter and now I had to book a test of theory on line and had to clear it.Another month passed by and one day I finnaly booked it it took just ten minutes to do so and I was scared of it.I was given a date which was 12th May 2009 ,the fees which was £30 was deducted from my card.Now what to do,I for the first time start taking interest in the road markin and realised they are too complicated just like airport marking.Two days before the test I sat in library and surf the net and found almost all the syllabus .there are countless schools in Glasgow which prepares you for the test including theory and practical but I was confident ,it doesnot matter but after scanning and scrolling for an hour I realised its not a piece of cake,I went through it agin still I was not sure what are these diagnol yellow lines at the junction and what do they mean by bus lane and host of others.The night before the test Mariox

invited me late and after couple of drinks I stayed at her place,she put on the alarm for the next morning but at ten o clock in the morning I declared its better to stay here,later we went for a drive and lunch at Troon ,incidentally it was our last get together.

Next I book the date after one month ,in any case its not ones chouice rather it is availability of seats from the DVLA.On 12th June I reached the office it was on saucihall street ,I entered it and reached the desired floor,waited in queu which was very short ,I had same feelings which I had in my metric examination ,I realised why its so important,I have been studying it.My documents were checked and I was given a token which I took it to the another person which briefed me on the procedure and I entered another room where there were computer consoles.the theory test consist of over fifty questions which are largely clips and multiple questions and you have to tick the right answer ,there was a mock test as well and certainly it has to be done within a time frame which I believed was forty five minutes.Ithey were tricky in nature yet aim was not catchy,I came out ,there was a pin drop silence in the room and there was no invigilator also.I was told by the incharge to wait for half an hour or less before I get .There were clear instructions on the wall which made it clear that any verbal or physicall assault on the staff would be reported immediately to the police,secondly no discussion on the result as well.In this brief time I thought about aviation

school and army entrance tests ,if we can have similar tests procedures then lot of ill feeling can be over come but the irony of fate is that all this equipment requires electricity uninterrupted one which we lack.I got the result the suspence was as similar as I used to have in the AFIP for my drug abuse tests,I passed it with the minimum marks but I had passed it.The few other candidates who passed gave thumbs up sign and I left the building and went down to the street and now I had a very respectable outlook for all those who were sitting behind the vehicles that include even the young ones because I realised that you cannot get driving test here just because your father is a minister or you are an officer,none can you help here you have to read and prepare for it ,in the end the roads become safe to drive and walk.It also removed another fallacy about british drivers'they are courteous' the test is design as such tio inculcalte it.In my mind I image myself sitting behind a rental car at least and for the first time read the advertisement of rental cars £15 a day £100 for a week ,in my heart I made plans for visiting Scotland on car and by the time I reached my flat at Kelvinhaugh street,I like most of students preferred walk as it saves money.and during that walk I waved as many drivers as I could and felt inferior to them for the first time.I also thought and by the time I reached my room and had the first beer I was convinced that I should go back to Pakistan by road.I thought of colonel ahsan janjua who

did it in 1989 and even ex president musharraf did it with Sehba in 1978 ,that I read in his autobiography.Now practical but where to start from.

Fresher Week

I was not part of the fresher week when my term started because I was late by a week however when the next one started I was in the university and observed it.In mid June the messages start coming in your mail box from the university asking for volunteers and paid work in relation the fresher week,university pays the best rates for hourly work in the whole Glasgow about £7 per hour.student has to confirm their availability through mail,everything is through electronic mail,I in my usual casual manner confirmed it on the last day thus I was not picked yet I received a message informing me in most polite manner that vacancies are filled ,it was a blessing in disguise as I was heavily committed inn my dissertation in that time period.Students who are part of reception committee are issued special t-shirts which indicate that they are the helpers,a day briefing session is conducted for these where free lunch is also given to them.

University buses are plied from the university to the airport,and from buses I don't mean that these buses are owned by the university or they have bold painted marking of the university of Glasgow written over it,I

think uni doesnot own any bus,yes it has couple of coasters which are used for campus transportation between varying living complexes free of cost and drivers are all students including girls which are paid for this but you need a driving licence for this.,these coasters have the university marking on them.Coming back to the fresher week,I saw bus being parked on the University avenue and the new students stepping down ,that was their first ever step on the uni soil,their bags and they have heavy luggage were in the rear of the bus which they have to pick themselves and carry them to the Fraser building just fifty yards away>in the frase building there were three students on a rota till 2100 hours which help them in guiding them to their accommodation ,for this the uni provides free accommodation apart from complimentary tea/coffe and snacks.why I came to know all this ,because my friend Zeeshaan from QMR was there and he met at night out side the library while I was busy in dissertation and I went down with him to the Fraser building and was glad to have free coffee and biscuits which were there,there was a coffee kettle and boxes of biscuits,zeeshaan also gave me a free voucher of one coffee which I can use at the main coffee ,I used it after two days but I was scared lest I or zeeshan gets in to any trouble over this,the point to highlight that one becomes law abiding here and always think in more broad term than the initial gain.

The students comes from all over the world and one can see this written over their face,they are shy ,confused and walking in group and taliking politely among each ,trying to pair with others,majority of foreign students are from China followed by subcontinent,its difficult to say who is from Pakistan or from India as they have same features and they are all smiles with each other,one can make out Pakistani girls mainly throught kameez shalwar,Indian girls generally wears jeans,the Malaysians girls are always clad in scarf around their head not once in whole year I saw any one without it,same holds true for majority of Iranians and arabs.

In the university the first week is very colour full there are stalls from almost every club and association like mature students association ,medical ,history,their aim is not to lure the student but to provide the information,the helper students take them on around of the campus,the new intake is allowed free access to the recreation facilities free of cost for aweek.The night clubs from the city also holds their stall which are on trailers and buses giving away passes for free drinks.The city's night life depends quite much on the students especially the clubs like campus social animals viper etc the one located on the Sauchihall street,its but natural that if you go to a club once then you will prefer to go there for the rest of your term,then there are flyers from barbers announcing the reduction of cost for students.yes barber is very important here and one really has to take an appointment

from them and their cost also vary. For almost a week the lane in front of the library is reverberating with colour and music. Even the churches compete for the students ,the catholic chaplaincy would have its own welcome programme and Methodist another. The clubs of university remained open for a week with free entrance,I saw the longest que on Monday out side Hive.

Full Moon

Mariox says that I have a fascination with full moon and I don't deny that I do have. Today the 9th of April 2009 it's a full moon and I have just come upstairs after watching rather staring at it for hours,its cloudy yet it was satisfying to see that golden globe of madness. I first had an affair with full moon in Thailand on that island of Khosa muay with Ingrid and from that point onwards it became part of me,especially the moon that I witness in Skardu with my family

Here I am counting my stay in terms of full moon,now seven full moons have eclipsed and five more to go. When it rises it is towards the east and around midnight it is at right angles to my room and after that it comes over the trees and as I walk towards it I can get an angle from where I can stare it through the branches of trees and later at night it comes over the houses on Bellshaugh lane and if I walk more towards the houses than at one particular angle it is straight over the houses

and gives a haunted look, I normally put on music through ear phones and enjoy tea with Vodka and moon. So many seasons have passed, I remember the day when it was snowing and even then I went down to have a look and was caught staring by the guard Alfred and from then onwards me and Alfie became friends he is in his seventies and I came to know that he is married for over forty five years with same woman and now he teases me with questions .when is full moon? Initially it was damp thus I couldnot sit on grass but tonight it was comfortable. I remember my family through full moon, I listen to their voices,their laughter and cries all through full moon.

Camphill

I am working as a patrol guard in this area since December 15th and today is 15th February ,I normally come here on week end and at times I have been doing the job in between also,my duty starts at 1700 and finishes at 0200

It is a residential area in the south of Glasgow city next to Queens Park on lexington avenue,it consist of around five hundred families living in flats.the flats are around twenty years old they are made of brick but not painted or plastered,only two blocks are more than three floors rest all are generally double storeyed

Area is bounded on its one side by a main road and on its front is a small road and behind is another small road but

there is a fence there and on last side there is another block of flats

Somebody asked me once ,are they rich people? And my answer was in England you are either rich or poor,so these people are not poor but yet they are not rich as well,if cars are the datum level to gauge any body's wealth then these are a mixtures of people,there are BMW,Mercedez, and ford fiesta,Suzuki alto,Skoda, and few plumbing vans as well

The whole complex is divided into almost twelve blocks named as Bute court,Alisa,Lethington,Mooray,Gloucester and so on,they are three roads that leads into this complex from the front and a path way as well.The demography of the people is majority white,very few Asians and even fewer east Europeans although they are difficult to judge in that way.The age group of people is also mixed young ,middle age and old and some are very old,I will come to that fact later,most are families,there are children as well but as there number is low in overall city thus they are not in big numbers and neither are teenagers,the rae is not very huge but neither it is amall,there is one medium size rather small park in the middle and there are almost small lawn in front of every block,trees are in numbers,flats are small maybe one to two bed ,a kitchen a lounge a store and and a toilet,lifts are there in only two blocks,it generally takes me at a very leisurely pace

to complete one round in zig zag manner around forty minutes

Shall I start from beginning or from present,well its 1950 15th February now and I am waiting for police to come because one of the garage door was opened when I came here at 1700 hours and the garages are separated from others with a thick fly proofing and I duly informed my supervisor about this and now he is here and we both are waiting for the police to come,this is the first time that I am waiting for police other wise nothing has ever happened at least in my duty,yes last week two window glasses were broken in the ground floor flats and I did not took notice,however the system here works in a different manner

The company for which I work AAA security has a contract for providing security to this premises and is hired by the people of these flats,the guard comes here everyday from 1700-0200 hours and in day time there is a caretaker as well,not that it is a crime infested area rather people are generally more scared than they should be,but its their preogtive

On my first day I was shown the area by the supervisor who is a Indian ,student rather an engineer and working now as supervisor ,there are fourteen pointsmand guarding is electronic,I have one electric device called Co=Guard,its hand hekd and I have to touch it with these fourteen points that are spread all over the cpmplex,the

touching points are about a mobile phone size and placed on trees and walls, the supervisor took me around and showed it, I could not remember all of them and their location, between each complete patrol and next one there is a break of twenty minutes and I have a room with heater , radio and tea maker, company also gave a mobile which has to be in pocket while on patrol

My very first night was spent in locating the points, I was able to remember about nine points and the rest I had a general idea like trees, hedges and a fence. I practically searched touched and scanned every tree and was able to locate three more still two more were left which I found next night, I read the instructions which were in guard room, there was a mark difference in what I had been groomed in army and what was here. In army you can always have an excuse and someone else to blame and most importantly there is always someone to cover you up and equally important , someone to let you down as well but it was pure commercial, I am being paid in terms of hours and there is specified things that I have to perform, nothing more nothing less, I cannot say today it is snowing so I can have five minutes more break and neither anyone expects me to stay even a minute more than specified even if I sense danger

It was a cold night and I remember my mother because had she known this fact that her only son is on patrol on a cold night I am sure she would not have taken a

blanket herself also ,such is her love and on the other hand my wife would have prayed for more rain and cold ,just to get even with me

When I walked on patrol I had no feeling for the people who were living in the flats,it was weird because never in my life had I been void of feeling while on duty,at least the regimental pride was always there if nothing else,but here all I had was my personal pride,I remember the time when I first went out to check a guard on my first day in army in Sargodha almost quarter of century before and with same mental feeling I walked,I was a duty officer checking the guards in a cantonment and that's all.The major difference was that these guards were electronic ,I cannot ask them 'how is your morale,how is your family young man,when did you last went on leave,what you had in dinner, I hope sergeant major isnot that tough on you and neither could they complain about the food,the heating arrangements,the number of duties or similar suggestion,I started enjoying the duty as it provided me time to think of my past,moreover I considred myself lucky as now I had the opportunity to see and observe the locals from close range,I can stare at a flat,I can stand at the crossing for as much time as I like I can walk at the backyard of the flats and I have no hesitation to admit that I enjoyed this little power in an alien land

I kept a diary with me and in those twenty minutes of break I would write what I felt.

I was reading Commandant of Auschwitz an auto biography and found it absorbing thus on patrol I would mentally think about that , I met an old English lady of around seventy plus and she asked me ‘are you our new guard and I replied affirmative and she answered ‘people say you are good. My morale went sky rocketing

I had one problem and that was I did not know where is the toilet,neither Nomal showed me any one and neither I asked him about this,but now the cold along with couples of tea and I had an urge to pee but where,on my top there was a birthday party going on and from voices I could make out that it of a woman and not that of a child,moreover the ladies would stand in the window to smoke,had it be Pakistan I would not have felt any major problem but here in Scotland I knew from my course on security that it is an offense to pee in open and secondly the company would not have liked it a bit to know that I was peeing in open but I had to pee,thus there is a dark patch about thirty meters from the guard room and grassy as well so I walked as I am there to see the area and then I opened the zip and peed,but it got on my mind as to what will happen if have upset stomach,I am casual by nature and never really bothered about this aspect of life but here it was a different ball and game

The second major aspect was that I had bought a tin of corned beef and as I tried to open it I cursed Brazilian because it went through my hand like a knife, I had bleeding which seemed unstoppable, luckily I had a white handkerchief and wrapped it around but it hardly worked.

The night went on and I regularly patrolled, it was pre-Christmas time and many of the houses were decorated with trees and others had few lights, now from an observer's point of view the question which I debated in my patrol was, why there are some having lights and others not, any kind of question can arise in a guard's mind and this decorations of the flats remained my constant point of focus, I will with the passage of time observed certain more houses getting trees but overall their number was much less,

The other lesson which I learnt on that night was the value of money, it's not easy to earn money, probably this was the first time in my life that I was earning money through hard work, I don't consider army life as hard work it was fun and money was never a part of army life but here life revolves around money and it helped me in understanding certain cultural aspects,

Kew

My dissertation is about Air observation post between 1939-1947, I was happy to do about this as I have profound interest in this subject and it was through this that I came to know about Kew the national archives.

My friend Lawrence had the topic about Malay and he informed me that he would be going to London and he has a friends flat thus I was welcome, last week 13th april 2009 I as usual without any forward planning just moved out of my flat with an intention to go to London, soon all my ideas were dispersed as I found out that it is easy to travel in east than in west, you really have to book everything beforehand on net and thus I had to travel to Edingburgh first and than catch a bus after five hours from there , I got the last seat on that bus and after a hectic long night of travelling which was as good or bad as in my country I reached London, my mobile battery was finished, but because of Archives detail instructions I managed to reach there,taking a district line from Victoria for Richmond and got down at Kew.

Its so typical british , clean streets, small railway station, it was a warm and sunny day , I text Lawrence and than sat outside a small café, had breakfast and tea, change my three hundred dollars and got 180 pounds. Lawrence came and we both walked for A, after ten minutes walk we were there. What an impressive building it is, Lawrence guided me all along. First I deposit my bag in the locker room than walked up stairs and entered all my details on the computer and after that I walked in to a sitting office and a woman checked my ID , took my pictures and there and then my Reader Ticket was handed to me without any charges, now I can access and read original files. Later on another computer, there are

plenty of them there,I searched the documents selected three,you can order threee at a time and twenty one files in one day,it takes almost half an hour for files to be placed im my locker in reading room,computer also book a seat for you in the reading room as well.You can take only pencil without rubber and anote book inside the restricted area,all the way you have to scan through your readers card,the staff is highly cooperative and what a feeling it is to touch original documents of world war two,

You can take digital pictures of the documents as many as you wish,you can take print out of the documents,all you have to do is to get up and walk to three scanning machines,scratch your card,put money in there it cost 20p per copy,and placed the file on the desk and press buttons and paper after paper comes out,you can do fifteen copies per session

You can book your files for tomorrow as well ,the archives open at 0900 hours but access to readers room is at 0930 hours and you can place orders for files at 0945 hours which will be placed in your glass shelf after 45 minutes and that's all.The staff roam around and keep eye on the people,you cannot read file holding in hand,the paper is delicate and old.All around I see people of various ages and colours doing research and busy in history.majority give scholarly looks maybe it's the aura of the place.

There is a café downstairs where you can have coffees and lunch and certainly you go out to smoke, there is a book shop and museum as well. its a very friendly place. I met Mr rafi Imtiaz a Pakistani who told me that in his ten years of service I am the fourth Pakistani which he has seen here

Glasgow university library

I am fond of libraries not only for reading books but also for stealing books, I do admit that I find no immorality in stealing books from library and then generally donating it to another library, the other feature of my life atleast for last two decades and even before that has been that I have always paid fines to the libraries, despite my best effort I have never been able to avoid it and always either I become very good friend with librarian or I am blacklisted from it. with this background I took keen interest in university library,

The library is imposing and stood in almost in centre of university although not in the main complex yet no student can avoid it or by pass it. When on second or third day I went into it, the first thing was that it had automatic doors then there are barriers which are opened only when you place your card over it they are magnetic, it has eleven floors and there are two security guards which sit at the entrance. The first step was to get the library card and I was told that there is no library

card rather my university registration card will work as the library card .After I got my registration card rather before it because it took much longer time as compared to the others I was issued a temporary card to draw the books and I drew few books and when I had got the card then I went back and searched the library

On its different floors there are books on different subjects.The ground floor has the reference books which can be drawn for 4 hours to one week and than the other floors deal with varying subjects.It looks simple but it was not the case with me.My subject was War thus I went to that section on floor eight{it has lifts}and was disappointed to find only one shelf dealing with military science and cursed the university for that.I was also told and directed how to open my computer account ,it happened after an incident,I went to library and tried to issue a book but the computer refused to acknowledge my account.The procedure of getting a book issued is simple,you place your registration card on a machine and than you place the books and each book has a bar code ,after you have issued the books the machine gives you a print out and that's all.Next day I went agin to find out the reason of this and I was told that I have a fine of over 30 pounds in my name,I was shock and amused as the same time,at least my old record has remained intact in paying the fine but I question the lady on the counter,there are over four counters.She told me that the book which I got issued was required by another student

as well and library had send me the message on my email and I have not returned the books thus there is fine for that.I confessed that I have been daily checking my mail but never found any mail from library it was after some time that I realised that she is talking about student mail account about which I was unaware thus first I opened that account and had a pleasant debate with lady about the fine,it was classic in every sense and after some time she waived all but one pound and I also gave up and paid the fine.

Library is an indicator of how students behave and their life pattern.On week ends it was a pleasant surprise to find a large number of students studying here till late,library opens at 0730 hours and close at 0200 hours at night.I was also impressed that a post graduate student can draw books upto 40 in numbers for three months, and it is here that they have another built in system,now if I have drawn forty books and someone else also requires the same book then he can check it on library net where all books are displayed and can place that book on hold thus I will be send a message on net and also a postal mail to return the book after seven days,I can also renew my books on net by simply ticking them and that is so simple but it took me time to understand this.

Every book has many copies and some can be drawn for overnight or on hourly basis as well.There are enough computers and printing plus photocopying facilities and

again they are all computer oriented for instance for photocopying you need to buy a card of two pounds and then take the books for photocopying and do it yourself ,naturally I couldnot do it myself and required help in all stages,I enjoyed this feeling of almost total igonarance in dealing with these gadgets but all students were helpful.

You cannot smoke inside thus outside on steps one finds a number of students sitting and smoking ,it's a good meeting place but I never saw anyone wasting time there yet it is the hub of all activities .

My biggest shock came when one day accidentally I found that that all the books which I have purchased out of frustration because I thought they were not available in the university library were available but in history section.I was ashamed of myself that why I did not explore it the way I have explored the Oran Mor Pub.It has a very rich collection of military history books and rare record as well.I am gratefull to my friends Martin and marzia who spend almost their whole days from morning till late at night in library and thus I also develop that routine and finally after six months of stay in university I was able to claim that tonight on 6th April I was the last one to leave the library

This library has also helped me in understanding the western culture to some extent.I have seen the new generation spending countless hours here ,it would not be wrong to say that one can find equal numbers of

student here as in university night club on any given day.Almost every student holds the door open for other student as courtesy and other one always acknowledge it by saying ‘Cheers’.One thing is sure its impossible to steal any book from here and neither I have any intention of doing it but I am interested in knowing how the library deals with lost books which I am having an intuition that sooner or later I will face it.

One thing more in the toilets I have found grafitti done which needs no further explanation.

Mariox

Its Wednesday 10th December 2008 1900 hours and it was Monday 1st of December 2008 at 1345 hours when I met her

As is my routine and its not that regular one yet on every first day of every month I invariably try to get into a new routine and it was one of those days ,it was cold ,not very cold and I from my university hostels walked out to buy the pipe tobacco and walked through the Botanic Gardens and made a right turn and stood at the crossing ,it was red signal yet people do try to cross and one woman ,an elegant one was trying to do so but than changed her mind,I somehow the other always get encouraged whaen I see a woman crossing in this way,I asked her ‘Go ahead’ and she replied ‘well I am unlucky in this aspect’and then signal turned green and we walked,now no body else on this gods erath other than

me knows what was in my mind at that time, the fact is I wanted to be with this woman and after crossing the road ,she said what are you doing and I think very next moment she said 'lets have coffee' and my heart literally rotated on this invitation. My biggest problem is that I alwys see in future ,I presume what will happen and than in a way try to make the things happen. Thus I was flabbergasted with this woman who told her name as Marion, but I took it as mariox,she got busy with her money withdrawl machine next to sommerfield market and I got puzzled as what to do, shall I go in to get my pipe tobacco or wait for her to finish her task. There were two thoughts running in my mind,if I go inside and she finishes her task and can just walk away and other was if she finishes her task and than I go inside than again she can get bored and walk away ,so I took some seconds and move to and fro,few steps towards her and than few steps towards the shop.I finally managed the pipe tobacco.

It would not be out of question to say that till now I was one of those few unlucky people who walk alone on Byres road and see the couples holding hand in hand and walking with warmth and love. All those who have enjoyed this feeling in the past and I am no exception always feel something missing when its winter time,

Well we walked and she bought her cigarettes ,no I think we first went to beano coffee and had the coffe ,she a

cappuccino and myself a black one.I was intoxicated with her Scottish English accent,I love this accent,because it always stressed up few words in a peculiar manner,she told me her age is fifty three ,she is divorced ,her daughter is thirty five and lives in Yorkshire and she intends visiting her on this Christmas,and she lives close by ,alone ,her flat was bought by her friend Jerry to whom she pays regular monthly rent and that Jerry is a gay.

My coffee was cold and generally I hate drinking coffee from coffee house but it was her company which made it sweet,

There is a psychological reason to everything which we do,I felt as I am part of the this society now,I have come to Glasgow after retiring from army and having two kids who are age fifteen and the girl age eleven and everyday I remember them and their mother who herself is a major doctor in army and our was a love marriage yet from the beginning we had this mental variation which was mainly due to mine smoking hash and listening pink floyd and her looking at the world with a suspicious manner and feeling insecure and later down the years feeling too secure.

Well do have anything to do in the evening,I asked her and she with all the innocence said no,

Would you like to go with me to primary,it's a bar ,where the thearitical students meet every Monday,I explained

Why not,she replied.

Marion told me ,she was born in Kilmarnock,got married at the age of seventeen,had her daughter and than got divorced from her husband as he used to beat her,

I was taken aback by her sheer honesty

I got married to this guy ,he already had three children, and he was alcoholic,I worked in the bar and than I got my daughter back from my first husband after a legal battle at edinburgh.

Taking a sip from her coffee she said,interrupting me as I said something about my visit to spain a couple of years back

I went to spain in 2001,I had this friend and she had two new born children and her husband had left her for spain where he lived with his parents and I was taking care of these kids on the eve of new millienium,I was now more interested in her and her story as I always like this aspect of human culture which is revealed by people and not by media ,I thought so they do care of their friends

We just got the flight and arrived at spain with my friend and her two children and amiir,she lengthened my name more than what it sounds ,this house was on the edge of

a town and the house was broken because they had not paid the electric bill so where I was living that portion had no electricity and there was nothing in the house to eat for a week because I was a vegetarian ,so for over a week I ate nothing but bread and milk and one day we finally went to the market and there they bought the food stuff and look at this I had to pay for this ,the father in law of my friend was a kind of notorious person and he said to me'You should call me juan it looks gracefull'.He runs a rent a car business and he had promised us before our arrival that he would arrange a car ,so we can have a trip and now there was nothing and we were away from the city so we were stuck up,the heat,hunger and all this was too much ,I nearly had a nervous break down,so one day I finally made a plan with my friend to get away from here,there was a function coming which we had attended ,the children were sick yet ,my friends father in law was adamant to take them along as it would enhance his stature

I called a taxi and as quickly as possible we all got into it ,I throwing the things inside and we hid under the seats and reached the airport and I just asked the counter any flight any where in england,Aberdeen Manchester,London anywhere we just want to go away, and believe me for another an hour we just hid in the bathroom of the airport.

I was thoroughly enjoying this story and was engrossed in her words and sense of humour and felt at ease,

Lets get out she said,

Okay

I have never said these things to woman,let they say no,I never resist what ever they say or desire

We came out and walked from Crawford street to Byres Road and than she got her cigarettes and we walked back to Ashton Lane and went into the pub and got two beers ,for which I paid,I feel really odd in asking a woman to pay for her drinks or coffee and on the other hand I can never have the courage to ask any one else to pay for my drinks,luckily I had a twenty pound note in my pocket,previously I had always been carrying a ten quid note but now they had finished so I carry this one and this was the first day of them.

I am a student and the one who is on self finance and that too on his pension and moreover I hate working thus I have no other source of income as well.

We sat out side and she rolled her fag and I lit my pipe and took a sip from beer and thank god for all this, I met one student the greek boy who lived in my block and I waved him as I wanted him to see that I am also sitting with a pretty woman, and I could see the impact in his eyes.

After finishing the beer we got up and walked started walking towards the ,there was a man standing there with a glass in his hands and was asking for alms,I had been in that state of affairs in my youth and perfectly like and respect these people and Marion also stood there and started talking to him and gave lecture cum shoulderering and the man narrated his story

He had children and loves alchol and lives on alms plus social security and we talked about many things,infact she talked I just stood there smiking pipe and in the end she gave him a big hug, and I thought when I was in france in this state none had given me hug and had anybody done that I would have been on moon ,then.

As we started walking she held my hand, and what feeling it was ,holding some one ‘s hand and walking, and I admit we look good ,I in my great coat and she in her length long black coat,I could have asked for nothing more

I had to return the library books and thus we climbed up and walked to the university library ,she in between told me that she had been in arts school after her divorce and than worked for warner brothers and also why she does not like Americans

Aamiir they ate such a big steak ,this big she made the size with her hand, and ‘they think I am stupid,because of my English,they will speak so slowly to make me understand but I knew them ‘

I returned the books in library and she developed conversation with the security guards and by this time I had realised she is a compulsive talker and conversationist

We walked along criss lane and had to go to the Primary which I knew where is located but was not sure of the path,thus holding hand in hand we walk and talk,she told me how she had attempted to commit suicide and how she remained a mental patient,in that chill even this look romantic and we reached primary.

Sorry I forgot after leaving the library it was almost seven o clock so I took marian to Grillicious

Grillious is a fast food joint owned and run by a Pakistani by the name of Khalid, and this is the first place in my life where I have cut onions,any way mariox preferred fish and chips and so do I, and talked about the food and so on,she doesnot like colas and wanted a water which I fetched for her and I could see the eyes of Khalid ,he had admiration for me and for her as well,

We walked from grillious hand in hand and reached primary, this was my first time in primary ,it's a big pub an old one and there Ben Watson ,emzy and few others ,we reached counter and she ordered beer and so did I,I paid for both and sat in the couch in one corner ,across and after some time she said she is hard of hearing and sat next to me and we again talked and talked,she told me about her days in hampden,hash ,drugs ,alcholol and

so on ,we went out and sat on a bench and smoke cigarette and she remembered she had been here almost twenty years ago and pondered whether this bar was here then or not,she told me about Lonzo her friend at hampden ,her last affair almost six months back which almost killed her,because of emotional drain and I simply kept listening and wondering where it will lead to,we had another drinks and since I had ran out of money and thus she paid and I did not felt odd.

It was almost ten and we walked back ,on great western road ,hand in hand ,like two old friends and turned to Queen margaret drive,it was chilly and frosty and I had to hold her lest she slipped and than across the canal bridge and she narrated me how once she and her husband were coming back late one night and how she after a fight preferred walking alone home and was attacked by a mugger and how she fought them and we walked and finally reached the stairs which were dark and slippery and we climbed up and turn right and after a block we both reached the front of her block and she said'Would you like to have a tea' and my world stopped there as all was happening the way I have read ,dreamed and experienced my only worry apart from the essay which I had to submit at the end of week was 'will it get up'in this frost and I walked in and she closed the door and turned back and that was the first we hugged each other ,it is a small and neat apartment ,as you entered a small bedroom on your left and than a big bedroom,big

in comparison to the small one,an en suite, a washroom in front and a lounge on your right ,we entered the lounge and there was white sofa,white seats,white mac and flatsreen and she said all is helped by Garry,she went to her room and came back in a black pyjama and shirt and started making tea and I was now wondering what should I do,shall I hold her and kiss her,but what if she doesnot like this,thus there was this mental battle going on,one part of my brain was saying go ahead and touch her and other the natural one was just waiting for her next move,finally I slowly and shyly touched her:no reaction and than I touched agin and she was happy and we sat on sofa,she put on music,and I mentally went back almost eighteen years ago to a similar flat and circumstances in New York and she kept on talking,I noticed she prefers talking more than listening and would give me some time to say some thing but than again talked

My father was a railway mechanic and my grandfather was a cobbler and when I was a kid,there was no hot water in our house and we used to warm the water in the tub,the toilet was out side ,I never liked church and would question about going to church but my mother would send me there and after some time I started hiding in my grand mothers house till my mother came to know about this,my father used to love me much,I was the only child and he would cook the food and he never liked

junk food and my mother would like to eat chocolates and so on,

I was entering into an era about which I was always inquisitiveness ,and she was right from the frame,

I couldnot thank my stars for meeting her,but the big question was ,what next,as freud said,whats on mans mind and on my mind was when she is going to kiss me and would take me to her bed and what will I do,but I was listening and we finished our first cup of tea and she got up to make the next cup and I also followed her and hug her from behind

‘I don’t like this fast,I prefer things going slow’. This came to me as a shock and reality and I started looking her with new dimension, what is she, what is in her mind, why was I thinking of her in other aspect ,it was all due to watching too much porn.

Anyway I felt sheepish and remained silent and we had next cup of tea and now I was listening more intently and with new respect and new vision,all that I have been thinking all day has come to nothing,absolutely changed;’well I am tired and I had to go sleep’ It was an indication to me and I also got up put my flying shoes and graet coat and gave her one final kiss and walked out in bloody cold night and started walking back to queen margraret residence which was well over two kilometres away.But it was an interesting walk I kept on thinking about the days event,I had her

number and she had mine, so we will meet each other again and I finally reached my room and started working on my essay ‘How important was strategic air power in the outcome of second world war’ but now my mind was fresh and healthy ,I did not watched porn and concentrated on essay and had a good sleep and in the morning thought of her.

I text her next day and did again by mid day, although it looks odd but texting has its limitation as doesnot convey the feelings

Morning Walk In Glasgow

Since our childhood we all are familiar with morning walk, some have taken this walk holding their grandparents hand and others have done so holding or running with their parents. Above all we all have been reading and writing about this event as it is one of the favourite essay of our education system

I am a student here at University of Glasgow, age 43, and a retired army major, undergoing Master of Letter in War Studies ,since October 2008.I am living in university accommodation, the Queen Margaret Residence on Bellshaugh Court which is located in west end of the city, a peaceful and quiet area. There are over twelve blocks accommodating over nine hundred students of multi-sexes and multi nations of varying age,

presumably I am the second oldest here the oldest is a decade older than me from Africa.

I have a small room of my own and I love to go for a morning walk or jog, the weather is cold ,chilly, damp and most of the time it is raining and it adds charm to this ritual.

I get up at around seven and it is dark at that time and when I get down it is half past seven and still dark, I hear birds chirping and an occasional student going or coming from a job. Out of my block I take a right turn on the Bellshaugh Road , it is a residential area and there are houses on both side of the road, the cars are park on the road and are frosty, another hundred of meters and there is a school ,The Resource Academia, a private school. It is still dark and parents drop their children ,the young ones are always sitting in the rear and their school bags are always in the boot, the mothers and fathers help them cross the road and generally wait till they have gone inside. As I walk forward I come across one odd person going for walk with his or her dog or dogs. Most of the people do say good morning to me and same goes for me as well.

I cross a road which at times takes few moments as it does not have any traffic signals and after another hundred yards I enter the Botanic Gardens. Its an uphill climb and its lovely and peaceful, when I came here it was autumn but now all trees are bereft of any leave,

there are number of squirrels which roam around without any fear, there are benches in the park all dedicated or donated by the next of kins of deceased ones. I forgot to mention that the very first people which I see every morning are the Glasgow City Council garbage collector, which are busy collecting the green garbage bins in their trucks, I hardly remember that I have heard any horn in the morning. Coming back to the botanic garden, I walk through it and come across few old people mostly with their dogs. I in particular remember one person who met me in the park one day and without any previous introduction embraced me and wept and said he has lost his mother a few days back and need someone to cry with.

I walk through the garden and then at the end I descend down to the River Clyde and walk along its bank for another kilometre before I ascend back to the garden. It is absolutely a peaceful and clean walk, I hear water running and by this time there is little hustle bustle ,few cyclists and few morning joggers are there. The school children who apparently comes from different part of the city and at their own are the bulk of morning crowd. When I reach back to school ,I can feel an urgency in the air as parents are getting late for their job and some children have some last minute conference with their dear ones,I always look at them as they remind me of my children and the time when I used to drop them at the

school and it is at this point one realise that we all are same in this aspect.

The university students are now going to university almost all have headphones on their ears, the ladies are also on a rush to catch up the bus, and then I enter my block and after making a cup of tea I sit outside and enjoy it.

King Edward The 8th

Every nation is like a family and every family has some secrets which the rest of village and relatives knows and which is passed down the generation with alterations ,when you ask about it the old grannies give brushing aside comments.In Pakistan we have the similar secret about our father of nation Muhammad ali jinnah's love affair with ruttie Jinnnah ,who was his best friend's only daughter the richest girl in India,he was forty and she was sixteen and while he was staying at her place ,after three months one fine morning the house servants must have come hurrying down the corridors of that palatial mountain house and declared that Jinnah has gone and some one must have said and ruttie baby is also not her bed room and then some one must have said that gold jewellery is also missing..Now this happened in this

century and all record is in papers yet in Pakistan even army brigadiers are at times not even aware of this, similarly there is a secret of British ,the King Edward the VIII.

I did come across his name in certain books with the general impression that there was a king of England in thirties who felt in love with an American lady who was divorced and he wanted to marry her but parliament and religion did not allow him and he was forced to abdicate. He lived rest of his life in France where he died. The moral of the story which was hampered down was the supremacy of parliament, the beauty of English traditions. Yet often I would think of this man, who was he , why he left an empire on whom the sun never set , the more I ponder the more I started respecting him, later while compiling a list of men of century and millennium I came to this bitter fact that no man has ever sacrificed so much for a woman, yes it's a fact no man has ever done this much, we talk about Helen of troy , the taj mahal, yet these were act of violence where state machinery and wealth was utilised, but to abdicate an empire not only for your self but for your generation is an extreme act of madness and love is nothing but madness.

I was sitting in Eildeen's house on winton drive it was before Christmas, there was one more friend of her who was daughter of some one who had died and was quite

literary,I donot know how the name of Edward the 8th came but I said what I have written before,but I was surprised to hear a very different version,where she had no answer to my points she insisted that as a king he should have been more mature and religion did not allow that.I countered that ‘we are not talking about some thing which happened in last millienium but some thing that took place just seventy years ago ,are you telling me that this british empire and civilisation the so called light of the world did not approve the marriage of your king to a divorced woman,than how can you point finger at any other culture because no civilisation can be as brutal towards women especially the divorced as you were half a century ago’.We had the coffe and cigarretes,Eildeen’s home was the only house where I could smoke inside while sitting on a sofa.I left but I was dased that why Edward is not popular,I initiated the same subject to another lady who was well in nineties at Botanic Garden and certainly she must be not more than ten at that time yet she had no clear idea of this.I had heated debate with Catherine in Oran Mor,with Lawrence, and finally with the security guard in the uni library last night at midnight.I rushed to eight floor and then to 7th where parliamentary proceedings are storedand after half an hour was able to get the requisite volume,December the 10th 1936 was the day when King abdicated and prime minister Stanley Baldwin made the speech.this was the first ever announcement about the King,now in a more

analytical way ,and this uni education is all about this.The members of parliament are not school kids they had access to the newspapers and all the rumours which were going in American press which the Stanley quoted as his reason of approaching the king yet therete never was any question about the so called the affair,.On the same day Mr errington in a written question asked the minister of labour about the number of residents in Bootle who come in the category of seasonal workers, and Mr white on 26th November 1936 inquired about the relation ship between alcohol and road accidents yet no member dared to raise a querry about their King and we are not talking about medieval era but 1936.

The proceedingswent like this, prime miister Baldwin informed the house of commons while it was in session that he has a message from the king,now for every member the connotation must be different that as to what is king's message and they must be attentive,is it something to do with Germany or to India or any link to military pensions or increase of holidays for pregnant women while working in railway industry,because they all were ignorant .

Members of the house of commons

After long and anxious considerations I have determined to renounce the thronec to which I succeeded on the death of my father and I am now communicating this,my final and irrevocable decision

I ,Edward viii of great Britain .Ireland, and the british dominions beyond the seas,king emperor of India do here by declare my irrevocable determination to renounce the throne for myself and for my descendants, and my desire that effect should be given to this instrument of abdication immediately....my lawful successor ,my brother his royal highness the duke of york should ascend the throne

Evidently this is the most important words that a King has ever spoken because by this the power of love over greed was sealed for ever,it demonstrated that love has no boundries and since the women was not some duchess or prince but an ordinary looking divorced ameriacn lady it cemented the image of king ship ion the mind,in today's world that was an excellent public relationoing campaign which could have been symbol of Christianity.all the unrest movements in the empire would have died for ever ,every one would have loved to live under such a king who has the heart to marry an ordinary woman,the christain faith would have converted almost all the hindoos where second marriage of a widower is not takebn in good spirits,yet it did not happened like this,

At 1547 hours the Baldwin rose and uttered ‘no more grave message has ever been received by parliament and no more difficult I may almost say repugnant task has

ever been imposed upon a prime minister{ In his opinion the declaration of first world war was not the difficult task,oratory}

Prime minister informed the house about the back drop of this message and since there never has been a question raised in the parliament about the king's affair thus it is to be assumed that none knew about it. Stanley said that he was ill and was on holidays in October and when he came back to office there was a pile of correspondence from british citizens in America and from all over the dominion and from this country all expressing perturbation and uneasiness at what was then appearing in American press{ yet no news in british media the so called father of media}. Now there was a divorce case going on in america and the lady under the case was alleged to have the friendship with the King of England{whats wrong with that}. Now Stanley is concerned only 'if that gossip and criticism spreads from the other side of the Atlantic to this country' so he decided to go and tell the King about his concerns and he admits 'I consulted I am ashamed to say and they have forgiven me-none of my colleagues'.

This is not the prime minister of some underdeveloped talking in 16th century but british prime minister in 1936. It raises further questions about the very system which later took the whole nation to the war.any way coming back to Stanley.

Stanley met the king and told him what is being written in the paper ‘badshah salamat kin chakroon mein hain aap’.the king just listened and after few days the matter finnaly rested on this that either he should leave the woman or leave the crown.

This matter was not discussed in the parliament it all took place between the prime minister and the king and certainly his family which included his mother.Stanley took the line that other dominions are against the King’s marriage to the widower and that included Australia,Canada,south Africa and newzealand,all this has been revealed by the cabinet papaers.But this is too simple a line to be accepted,how the public in these dominions would have reacted is up to guess but since the majority of the people were poor or middleclass and women certainly made up to fifty percent of the population thus it would had a positive aspect and not the negative one as perceived by the respective prime ministers.There is nothing in the christinity that forbids the man or any king to marry any widower.I had a talk with Eildeen on this and for the first time she had nothing to say in the defence of the decision other than that in Christianity marriage is a sacred affair and it could not be allowed at that time,I counter her by stating that we are not talking about a king in medieval era but the one just seventy years ago and how come religion can forbid it,if this line or arguement is accepted then

what is the difference between satti in Indian religion and christianiy..

Coming back to the proceedings of the parliament on 10th december 1936, prime minister in his speech further highlighted his feelings and advice he gave to the King “ I reminded him of what I had often told him and his brothers in years past, the british monarchy is a unique institution the crown in this country through the centuries has been deprived of many of its preorogatives but today while that is true it stands for far more than it ever has done in its history...this feelings largely depends on the respectect that has grown up in the last three generations for the monarchy it might not take so long in face of the kind of criticisim to which it was being exposed to loose that power far more rapidly than it was built up and once lost I doubdt if anything could resotre it” Now the prime minister is given his own opinion but that is not democracy but national socialism, he did not consulted the parliament nor he went to the public to gain their opinion, thus King was given only two options and he had to decide quickly , Stanley spoke in the parliament “ again we must remember that the cabinet had not been in this at all I had reported to about four of my senior colleagues...I told the king that particular marriage was one that would receive the approbation of the country, the marriage would have involved the lady becoming the queen...my worst enemy would not say of me that I did not know

what the reaction of the british people would be to any particular course of the action”.

On 25th November 1936 the King saw the Baldwin and meanwhile a suggestion was floated that parliament should discuss the marriage of the king with a provision that lady would not be proclaimed as queen,when king ask the prime minister about the proposition he replied as he stated in the parliament “parliament would never pass such a bill and if he wants I can examine it formally” on which the king said yes. It was at this point that Stanley formally got in touch with the other dominions and on 2nd December a mere week later he went to the king and informed him that there is no chance of his marriage beibng approved here or in any of the dominion,his majesty asked him to answer the question of his marriage with the lady and Stanley replied in negative ‘his majesty’s said he was not surprise...I pointed that that the possible alternatives had been narrowed and that it really had brought into the position that he would be placed in a grievious situation between two conflicting loyalties in his own heart-either complete abandmontment of the project on which his heart was set and remaining as king or doing as he intimated to me that he was prepared to do”.

Alas what a man King Edward the 8th was,not many would have given a second thought about leaving the kingdom ,now a days one see swarms of immigrants who

have left their loved ones for the greener pastures of the new country and yet here right in our own time was a man who left the kingdom on which sun never sets just for the sake of a woman he love,not another example is there in our history which is full of violence and war.even great Abraham the father of abrahamic religion when he sets foot in the egypt with his beautiful wife told her to declare him as his her brother thus to avoid the wrath of the pharaohs and Moses left his wife for the safety of his own life and here is a man who stood for what a man is all about,to write in golden immortal words of deeds,he did not wage a war for the sake of her love in which thousands innocent should have died but simply within a week stated ,here is your crown and I am leaving with my loved ones.

King was not immature as he has been portrayed rather he avoided confrontation with the parliament and did not divided the nation into two groups,there is no doubt that if there were equal numbers of people who would had disapproved his marriage than even numbers of people would had approved his act,if any one has any querry just have a look at the Megrahi's affair.

Pub

Pub is an English tradition a place where people go for drink,at least this is what I perceived,there are no pubs in my country.I remember that there used to be a debate among learned officers about what is the

difference between pub abd bar and it was ecided and verdict given that pub serves food and bar doesnot.I had been to few pubs and bars in my life before coming to Glasgow,I remember the one bar in New York city which had a nude dance and than I had few drinks in Café Hard rock in London in early ninties but I really don't consider them as traditional pubs.My interaction with pub started in Glasgow in October 2008 and now after six months of being a regular patron of 'Oran Mor' I feel I can write something about pubs and this culture.I admit that I havenot visited any other pub in this period ,well to be honest I had but it was with my university fellows for one odd night and that itself explains the pub culture,you go to one pub and than you stick to it such is the magic of pub.

It was 31st October 2008 the Haloween night when I almost out of nostalgia decided to go out from my room in queen Margaret residence a university accommodation on Bellshaugh court in west end of city.The reason was that almost two decades ago I had a magical affair on this night in New York and always cherished that thus it was to commemorate that feeling which compeled me to walk out.I knew no place where to go,I had seen this church type building almost daily while going to and fro to university and I did inquire from the security personnal posted out 'what is this? And he with a smile said why don't you have a look inside.and I peep inside and found it to be a place of intoxication in liquids.The

place is a medieval church and had a overimposing interior ,I with my little student budget did not venture in and walk away but with a vow that I one day I will go inside.Thus on that Haloween night I gathered the courage and walk.I had no costume other than my military great coat,shoes and jersey all first or second great war vintage thus ideal to ward off the icy weather of Scotland,I put fifty quid in my pocket and thought at least I would be able to have a drink.

Very few people can understand how much mental courage it requires to enter an alien place like a pub,on the one kilometre walk I gave assurance to myself that nothing is going to happen,after all you have walked alone in Burmaese jungles at night on the footsteps of Major John Masters yet my legs trembled for a last time before I enter the door after climbing the gothic steps .Nothing on this gods earth would have prepared me for the scene that I witness in those first few moments,there were witches,Draculas,sheihks,fathers,nuns,pirates,priests,brid es,barbarians,and host of other costumes,there was a noise and laughter.I solemnly walked among this crowd towards the counter not even knowing what to order other than beer.After first few moments I felt relaxed and easy,I could feel the stares of people but they were not menacing rather curious and friendly,the cost of one pint of beer was far far less than my expectations.as I turned around I found a pirate who smilingly put his hand

forward and said welcome,I shook his hand and said cheers.Amidst this crowd we could hardly talk but he invited me to his table where already there were five or six peoples were sitting it was next to fireplace, and from that day onward I always sat there.That was a magical night, laughter and jokes, the people after learning that I am a student and my past background did not allowed me to buy another drink and offered one after the other.I do remember that since smoking is not allowed inside so I went out to smoke my pipe and met a host of other characters, the two I recall were university students and one of them was too good in card tricks almost unbelieveable ,I left at morning ,I think I was the last one to leave the premises,I sat for an hour with Lady Godiva and her lover or lovers.

I went again after two days and found it to absolutely normal,I quietly had a pint and left.My next venture into the pub was with mariox,it was probably 3rd December and after having coffe with her at ashton Lane I invited her for a drink.I had met her only two days ago and was not sure where to go thus I entered Oran mor,she had been here before.

From that day onward I went through a roller coaster of emotions in this pub,I had some of my life best nights in this place.I have laugh,sang,dance,discussed Clausewitz,world wars,cricket,Oscar wilde and so forth needless to say I have shed few internal tears on the

way.I have seen snow falling outside through its hundred years old windows with fire place on,I have seen couples laughing and crying,people hugging and at times leaving tables without looking back towards their mates.

The more time I spend there the more I felt in love with this place.

What is a pub? Its not just an eating place neither it's a place to get intoxicated with liquor,it's a part of life,you can have coffee,orange juice or food,anything you like.You can sit alone you can read you can sort out your emotional and financial quagmire as well.It is what Mess is to army life.

I became a regular with Mariox,we will sit in the corner and she will tell me about her experience of working in pubs when she was young,she would invariably get into talk with anyone and so would others to me or us.I started noticing there are few regular people who would always be there and I did develop an acquaintance with them.On 13th December I walked into the pub after handing over my end term essay to the Christelle in University and enroute I talked to my mother back home and its always a good feeling after hearing her voice,I would have loved to talk to my kins as well but they were and still are In War with me for coming here,anyway as I walked in it was 1700 hours and I first sat on a stool then on a table but since it had an uneven balance which dripped the beer thus I sat on a

table next to entrance and waited for Mariox,when she came I rose and went to counter to get drinks and then I remembered that I had a diary for her in my bag and as I look back my bag was not there,I searched it under the table infact everywhere but it was not there,I asked the bar tender Garaham and he had no idea,I ran out but to no avail.I knew it that it has been stolen but my mind simply couldnot accept this fact that in this world any one can steal my bag.I had an inner laugh I normally do it when ever this kind of thing happens,that bag had a history,it was a hand made leather satchel,crafted by Shams Saddler in Rawalpindi in Pakistan who is in this field for last hundred years.I as a lieutenant would pass in front of his old shop with wooden door{It has not changed} and admire his craftman ship but never had enough spare money to indulge in this luxury of buying the bags.Years passed by and I would visit him when ever I was in town and at times purchased belts or watch straps but never the bag yet I would always spend hours in touching these bags ,to cut a long story short ,hours before I left my country I told my regimental officer Major Jawad to buy that bag and he did and now it was gone forever,on top of that on that very day Mariox also told me that she doesnot want to see me anymore.Thus I was at loss what to mourn more.I was also not sure about the behaviour of the pub about this loss of bag,are they going to accept that my bag was stolen from this place ,in majority of the cases which I have heard and seen in

world a place like this doesnot admit,even in my own country the first reaction would have been like this ‘sorry mate,are you sure you walk in with the bag....probably you had few drinks more than normal and now you cannot even remember that you walk in with bag or not...we never had anything like this here before...someone must have joke with you...or I think you are trying to pull a fast one on us’. It was with these feelings that I told Graham that my bag has been stolen and that’s all.Soon the manager came and said sorry for this and explained that some gang does these things and I could feel a genuine sympathy ,like a bush fire it was on everyone’s lips,Aamir bag has been stolen.Next day I went to Oran Mor and inquired about the bag but no success ,I did ask them that if I report to police I hope they wont have any objection,again it was in my mind that almost all establishment doesnot like getting involved with police.My interior motive was to understand how this society and police works and with that theme I was working.Pub had no objection and neither there was any change in their behaviour towards me,they did not consider me a load now and I was feeling guilty that due to my casual behaviour I had put them into trouble.

The interaction with police was another strange aspect.I saw two police men walking and they were unarmed and I catch them up near my university after a day or so,the reason for this delay was that I never

thought that police would be interested in a bag that has been stolen from a pub and probably they would say the same thing ‘First tell us how many pints you had before you realised that you have lost your bag?’ and then I thought they will say ‘ok come with us to the pub and then in the pub they will have free drinks as well’ these and all weird ideas were coming to my mind basing upon the experience which I had in my country,I was unable to suppress the inner smile on thinking how the police back home would have reacted.The two jhonnies took detail very seriously on a black book and said ‘don’t worry we will look into this and we will inform you’. While walking away I said to myself ,its not a bad deal for the loss of a bag atleast you have experienced how this police system works.

Now all the people I knew in the pub and I knew very few, were concerned about the bag,I would be stopped on Byres Road by someone and he would console with me and same was the case in the pub,I felt even embarrass.Yes the police did went to pub ,I was told by the mangaer and in a polite way.Any how I did found the bag,the thieves left it in a bank on Byres Road and bank did inform the number which was there in the bag,all I lost were two pair of gloves.

Coming back to pub,it was new year eve and there were tickets for entry as well ,I forgot to mention that I spend my Christmas eve in the pub and it was

fun. On new year eve I planned to get two tickets ,one for Mariox and one for myself,like always I got late and while I was talking to Graham for tickets and he politely said ‘its all sold out’ I was dishearted and turned away to walk,one distinguish looking man whom I couldnot place in terms of what his position in the bar is ,simply said ‘graham give him two tickets’ and then smilingly signed it and said to me ‘iam sorry about your bag’ I told him that I have found the bag ,but he insisted.

I was stunned,why he had given me two tickets,what I have been always perceiving is that there is no such thing as free lunch in west,yet this man has ben kind .Well I enjoyed the night and later learnt that man was Collin the owner of the pub and that fact was revealed only last week because I often saw him in jeans working outside with other workers as well.Thus pub can be an institution in learning the social values of this culture.

Pub has rules albeit unwritten ones,as long as you are not creating discomfort to the others you are welcome,now I can talk or write about this pub and this may not be true for others.

Ramadan in Glasgow

Ramadan is the most holy of all muslim months and it is a tough month as it involves a month of fasting,this was

my first Ramadan outside Pakisatan ,to be honest I have never kept a month of fasting yet living in Pakistan you become part of this months holiness,you cannot smoke or eat in open ,neither any mess other then the aviation mess is open thus I would normally have the maximum flying in this month to justify for not keeping fast not that it matters or any one questions .

In Glasgow as a student one is more concerned about free food than any holiness thus I was looking forward to Ramadan as I imagined that atleast there would be sehri and iftaari in the two mosques one of muslims and other of qadianis,I had visited the former as it was near my kelvingrove resiodence.When Ramadan started I was more busy in my dissertation thus I had no time to visit that mosque as it was bit far from the library and secondly they were not offering any shehri,thus my colleague Fida who initially did not kept fasts but later kept all the fasts informed me that the mosque on Oakfield street which was a stone's throw from the library is offering the iftaari,thus on the first day I went there it was bit difficult to locate the mosque amidst the rows of the houses and I knocked the wrong house and an English lady duly informed me with a smile that mosque is next door..the central mosque is in city centre and is quite big but it was bit far,here it was a house which has been redo to cater for the mosque and prayer house was in basement.In Glasgow there is no state's subsidy for any religion.I had to remove thec shoes and

there was a rack placed there yet majority of the people did not took the chance of loosing the shoes and took them downstairs,I think it is now more or less a culture associated with mosque that one is bound to loose a pair of shoes here.Down stairs there was iftaari in one portion and prayers arrangements in the other,there was nothing special in iftaari ,dates and cold drink.there was an assorted gathering of muslims,blacks,arabs,Bengalis,Pakistanis and there was one odd white as well.The prayers were same as in Pakistan but more soulfull and short.

Next day I was not interested in going thwere but Fida told me that there are arrangements for dinner as well,I reached there as prayers were finishing and headed for the food which was in the outer room ,for next one month the menu remained the same ,rice with chicken curry sometimes it was mutton curry but always well cooked,served in plastic disposable plates and glasses,one has to stand in the queu and there were two people who would put the food in your plates ,there were seats and tables to consume the food.It was watching and feeling islam from very close quarters,there were majority of students ,the Nigerian whom I initially thought as Christians in queen margraet residence were there and all of a sudden there was a bondage among all the men,there was no women ,I think the arrangements for the women were upstairs but in any case no female student came for the iftaari.the cook was a Bengali,for a

month I went there on most of the days and very rarely offered prayers yet they did not objected to my being there and neither any one tried to give me any sermon on fasting, the eating session would last for almost half an hour and later I would help in cleaning the room and disposing the dishes, because cleanliness is half of religion in islam. In later days pakoras were added and on some days there was sweets as well. i have no idea who footed the bill for this one month because no one asked for any donations but my own guess is that well to do muslims probably arabs footed the bill.

Fida later started going to the other mosque for change of menu but I remained loyal to this one, the population increased in later days . Although hardly any one in the city knew about the Ramadan yet I felt guilty while eating in streets or smoking in open. Mine and Fida routine was to go straight to Catholic Chaplaincy for free coffee after the iftarri. I met one female student from Peshawar who was staying with a Pakistani family and she was observing proper fasts and the day I met her she was hurrying to the flat as she had to go and cook the iftaari, Faiza the girl who was with me on the aircraft from Lahore and also in QMR was another person who observed fasts and in fact she invited many other students for an iftarri where every one has to pay for own. zeeshan another Pakistani student also kept the fasts. The muslims are mainly in running shops that involved selling of liquor , I noticed that in majority of

the shops they put a veil over the bottles in this month.In the city the shop from where I normally bought pipe tobacco the young man asked me ‘are you not keeping the fast? On my negative answer he further inquired not once, I kept quiet.sheeby the one who runs café India at shawlands also fasted in the month.

Here every one knew on which date is the Eid there was no fuss of sighting of moon,eid felt on Sunday,I was working on that day at Camphill,it was my supervisor Keanny who asked me few days before about the Eid and I inquired how do you know about eid? And he replied in his typical scottish accent ‘ I have grey hair aamir’.

It was the first eid in my life wherte there were no vermiccellis,no eidi to be given or asked,no new clothes for self ,no tailor ,no channd raat,no eid cards either posted or received other than one digital card from karam dad my old squadron non commissioned officer from Pakistan.while walking in Camphill for the first time I felt sad for a moment, I was alone patrolling and looked at the sky and wonder at the tides of time.My mobile was also not working yet I was able to rang my mother and father ,family they simply refused to pick the phone and I took it as a part of the game.for one month I was window shopping thinking about which dress will suit my daughter and which shirt will look good on my son,about wife I did not thought much as I knew no

matter what I choose it will be having flaws. My course mate colonel Khalid shahbaz was the only one to rang me from Pakistan on british eid day, I also came to know that in Frontier the eid is on same day as in England and I acknowledge their wisdom and scientific approach. Reena my old class fellow from my child hood and whom I found on facebook few days before the start of Ramadan was going on grand canyon trip with her friend on eid day ,thus it was more sad in a way.

On eid day Saleem the owner of Madina butchery was kind enough to invite me for a dinner on eid day but I regretted as I had to go for work,I however wore kameez shalwar on that day,the Indian student Ajmal from Hyderabad Deccan met me on street and we embraced each other he was buying sweets for the family with whom he was living as they had been preparing shehri for him the whole month. Usman the owner of Post Office on Great western road ,whom I met a day after eid took me on an eid lunch at Chillies at West end.

Muslim women generally wore their best dress on that day with plenty of make up,even Keeany noticed the ear ring in one's while her car was parked next to ours at a stop.at camphill there are few houses of muslims and I noticed the kids wearing new shoes and every one clad in good clothes,that was the eid here in Glasgow.

Gymnasium of university

On Oakfield street is the university 's sports and recreation centre, I went there after few days.Now there is always a hesitation in going to any new gymnasium at least I have always felt this way.I am a keen a sports man and have kept in generally good health in army.The building apparently looks small ,I used to to stare at it while sitting on the footsteps of mature students association ,and from that angle I had full view of the swimming pool and that was tempting,last time I had a swim was in Karachi in 1996 while bein part of the helicopter crew looking after the sheikh of dubai in Sheraton hotel.Coming to this ,as yoou enter the building there is a counter behind which are one or two staff,one girl and boy ,the boy I remember because had west Indian type hair like Michel holding.The forms were given and within five minutes I was a member for a fee of 30£,it was tooo quick for me, I am used to the pattern where on day one it takes hour to get a form ,then it has to be taken back fill it and then get it signed from concerned military officer .before coming to Glasgow I was in Lahore and they had a garrison sports complex so I went there got the forms and after few days I took it to my wife's office to get it signed from the colonel,as I was on leave pending retirement thus I had no regiment to sign it,I gave the forms to administration officer who was my wifes's colleague Colonel Nigar,she was very helpful and called the head clerk who after much delay came and took the form ,next day when I went there the

clerk was on leave and when I went after two more days the forms were not traceable,finally I went back to the complex and got new forms and repeated the process thus from that point it was too quick.

You can enter the building by swapping your magnetic card which initially I had no idea how to use,here on first floor they had a weight lifting section which here is termed as power kind of thing ,adjacent to it is the running machines on second floor is the activity hall which has a wooden floor and you can play basket ball or badminton ,when badmintonis played then simultaneously five nets are placed on top floor are two wooden squash corts and host of machines, and in base ment is all weather swimming pool.Changing rooms are on every floor,there is a lift as well..All this is managed by not more than four people excluding two life gurads.The centre opens at 0700 and remains open till 2200 hours seven days of week with minorc changes on week ends.The other centre is at Garscube which has playing fields and host of other activities.University practically has club of every conceivable sports,canoeing ,rafting, mountaineering,basket ball,rugby,cricket and so on.

There is a system of working here ,if you want to play squash then you have to book the court for such and such timmmings,balls are provided free but for racket you have to pay 60 P,in case if you bring your own

balls{which every one does} and racket then its free.All my life I have never booked a court because I can never planned a thing ahead,so I never booked it but I learnt it hard way that here one has to plan everything even sports.

Males and females enjoy and workout together in the complex.I was more interested in badminton which used to have three days of sessions in a week for three hours.The rackets and shuttles were provided by the university,they also have a coach on the spot.The members I have used the word members instead of students because the university staff also comes here.There were players of all age ,colour and playing skills,you just wait and either coach will indicate you to join a certain net or you yourself walk in,the coach himself is young.The coaching here is easy all you need is to attend few weeks coaching course at any of the college ,even life guards are ccoached and trained in college,for any student I strongly recommend that he or she should do this course,I did not do that because of my laziness and lack of forward planning.

On the court there is a courtesy which prevails,I have been playing a lot of badminton in my regiment ,the courtesy there is bit different because junior is supposed to pick the shuttle even if it falls on your side of the net {close to it}but here its generally quiet no applauses ‘Shot’ ‘What a shot ‘ yet I couldnot resist this joy of

shouting and would say the similar things. There was no hard and fast rule as to who will play with whom ,I have played with and against the other males and females,I once made a mistake of telling my female partner how to hold the racket,she never again played with me for a long time.The students who have never played badminton were also there ,majority of them were girls and they by the end were reasonable players.Chinese were good so were Indians,there was one odd Finnish as well,scots were there also.the players were of two types one who loves strokes and other who relies upon placing.In the initial days there was temptation on the field to score with the girls,I would observe all these activities.The girls I noticed take care of their dress,in a way that they were never caught off guard which is very much possible when you are playing this kind of game especially when you have to bend down to pick the shuttle.

My routine for quite long remained that I would not sleep all night ,I developed this habit while writing the history of aviation in Pakistan,it was enjoyable to be able to study all night and then in the morning go out for running in botanic garden and come back,at some stage I started going to sports complex and many a times I was the first one there,there was always the old lady who would be there at the desk and I would share few exchanges with her, and would also ponder on her strength to be here so early in the winter time.By virtue

of running I did not required any warm up yet almost every one would run on the mill with ear phones ,although within the complex there are music television with a notice as well ‘please do not change the voloume and settings’.invariably there are no instructions in the university which does not have the prefix of please or suffix of thank you.In my previous life every instruction invariably ranging from the one placed on the Mess television to public library starts with ‘Khabardar’.

There were no supervisor on the floor yet there was no problem of any thing no fights over the equipment or of any thing,there were plenty of tissues and every one was supposed to clean the exercise seat after its use to curb any germs flow.Now how can you resist the sight of a female in tights bending and stretching few feet away from you with sweat all over her body ,her breath heavy and her chest heaving,with wet drops of sweat falling from her forehead,well the answer is easy,its difficult ;but you are not focus on this scene.

My first visit to weight lifting section was after some time,why? I cannot explain,somehow the other I had an impressin that it would be different from the serened of the other parts,it was a big setup as comp[are to the other,students come and do their own work without making fuss of anything,none boasting or giving Mushwaras to the other and none showing his doolas in front. of the mirror.The majority were young lads

working frantically with weights trying to make their muscles. There was a notice 'Big Guys do weights and bigger guys put them back'. the ladies also use the same facility and frankly by this time I was not even aware of their presence in the same room. There were machines of every type and I was not sure of their proper use thus I would just see the other guys doing and try to follow that, I developed my own routine and generally sticked within range of 15 kilograms. swimming pool was a different ball anmd game story. First was the locker room ordeal. i have read and heard about the 'soap' in locker room ,but never knew about that ,the day I went down to the basement and entered the locker room and sat down and was wandering about how to change the swimming costume when I saw the man standing next to me simply gaetting naked and moving about,now I by any standard considers my self as very open minded yet it was something which I was taken aback,as I saw towards the shower room there were three or four guys standing naked and taking shower,now all this I took without giving any indication of anxiety.this was the routine then I would generally had the costume under me and would still had it on if it is wet ,but it was inconveinient,after few days I would change there but very quickly and that too in a corner ,I remember the day when in that process my costume's knot got entangled and I sat there trying to unknot it.males of all age would go through it yet there were some who would wrap a towel around their waist

and change the costume.males mostly aged would be engross in conversation while standing naked and some times they would be dangerously close to me.till end I never had a shower naked but I made a reservation that I will do that before I leave the university,just a matter of statistic I think everyone was clean shaved except me.

Swimming pool was fun ,there would be girls and men together and here again I noticed variation in female behaviour,some would be wearing colourfull bikini but majority would prefer rather something more conventional,they all would adjust their upper portion before coming out of the pool and majority would wrap a towel around while walking back,certainly their changing room is different and I only once had a glimpse of it because in the initial days I really couldnot make the male and female figures posted out side the respective doors.There is one sauna and one steam bath,the former I came to know about through Martin.It is relaxing to lie down in both,initially I was shy in both.the reason why I am highlighting this is because from a western perspective it may be rather usual because I have seen the children coming with their fathers in the locker room and standing their while these men were changing which I think is not good for a child but this is how it is,on the other hand in eastern culture it is something of a mystery as to how can man and woman both take swim together and then relax in saunana and steam bath without any mishap taking place ,from that

perspective it must be height of immorality the root cause of all the evils.I cannot

Telephone and Mobiles

I had an opinion and anticipation that in England the mobiles and telephones would of highest quality and service,the very first thing which I did was to get a Sim for the mobile but how to get the Sim ,I was guided by Sunny Singh whom I had met on second or third day and he briefed me that the best company is talk Mobile which provides very cheap call rates for Pakistan ,at that time I thought that I would be calling my son every day,there were long posters pasted on the shop which highlighted the rates and charges. On Byres road there are two or three shops rather there are only two which seems to be proper one to deal with mobiles and sims.In Pakistan even the vegetable shop keeper have sims which he doles out without any formality.

The shop on Byres road was well maintained and the salesman talked very politely as long as the mobile was not sold,he loaded me the card first time but since I have very rarely done it myself it has always been my son who would do this for me or the office runner thus when I went next time to him he was bit irritant and when I went to him third time he kept me waited for half an hour ,thus I decided to do it myself and found that its not that difficult to load a card.

The card can be loaded either by buying a voucher from a shop or through the cash dispensing machine,since I don't trust the cash machines so I would always buy the voucher from the shops.As compare to Pakistan where the mobile is uploaded with cards of the company which are available from all cigarette shops ,here loading of card is bit technical as not all shops deal with the Talk mobile and this I realised after a month.Second exercise which I did was to change my mobile ,my mobile was a new one but it did not had the songs to play and now I also wanted to listen to the songs while going to the university like all other students who in any case were using the IPod and other gadgets.Again I walked into a Pakistani owned shop on Byres Road as he was the only one dealing in second hand mobiles.When I showed him my mobile he simply rejected it by pointing out the flaws in it,on my insistence to buy a mobile with music facilities he showed me many ,finally I bought Nokia music factory,he charged me £25 apart from taking my old mobile,he did offered me cup of tea and discussed politics of Pakistan ,on hearing that I am from army he pointed out many of his colleagues and friends are in army.I enjoyed that mobile ,however I noticed that it was most of the time out of network coverage etc ,thus I decided to change the network and shift to something more international,again I floated the idea to Sunny Singh,he very promptly adviced me to change over to

Leebara network who not only give free sim but also give £5 free load..sunny singh is an expert in freebies,he dialled the number of Lebara company which was replied by someone from India and sunny singh had a good chat with him and bargained that instead of £5 he will need £10 or 8 at the minimum.The requirement was to have a PAC code from the talk mobile.In the mean while I went to London for research ,there I understood the handicap of having a network which is not international,it took me over an hour to find a shop which deals with talkmobile,finally I found that Tesco deals with them.On coming back I decided to finally change the network,here time is money and all the work is done through telephone thus if you miss one call you loose not only money but you can loose your job as well.

I went to the O2 office on the great western road,unlike my home country one has to really wait here till the salesman is through with the first person ,no matter how trivial your inquiry is you cannot butt in thus even a minor querry can take long and this exactly what happened,I left in frustration came back next day and was attended by the salesman,I bought the sim which was free but you have to buy a loading card of £10 thus it comes down to square zero,once the transaction was done and he tried to open the mobile and tried to insert the sim ,after some time sim was inserted and in between he said as a matter of fact that my phone has seen better days.Now the phone did not accepted this sim and my £

10 were going down the drain.thus I went to the Sunny Singh's shop he was not there but the Pakistani owner told me that there are mobile repairs technicians sitting ,I handed him the phone for a repair bill of £8,I did not collected the phone for a day and felt relax,next day I collected the phone and did not went to the O2 office.Now you can retain your old number if you change the network buty one requires PAC code and my network was unable to respond.These were eid days

Transport System of Glasgow

This city like any other any European city has a good transport system,infact no captilast country or any city can survive without an effective system of transportation,people must be able to go and come back from there work without any hassle,it should be able to handle all burden of people in a way that it should bring them to and back from work in a happy mood.

I had no idea of how it works and here is how I learnt to cope with it.My university is within walking distance from my residence and although there is a university transport system that operates at night between students residences and campus ,I came to know about its existence almost after four months of stay and from this one can imagine how I cope with city system.My first interaction with the buses happened after a week but before that I had undertaken a ride on taxi so I think I

first write about that. There are two types of taxis one is classical black taxi and the other are private taxis mostly Peugeot and Vauxall they are big in size and mostly in black colour, the third are more private in nature the Skoda, they are sedan in various colours but they display license prominently marked at the front and rear. Almost all taxis are radio operated, the black ones have a yellow indicator which if it is lighted means that taxi is available and you can wave your hand and it will stop but mind you unlike in our country it will not stop at all places but there are designated places where it will stop, there are taxi stops and parking areas, one thing is similar to Pakistan if the taxis are standing in parking area than you have to sit and avail the first one and not the next one. The taxi interior is as good and smell as fresh as a new one, you cannot smoke, drink or eat anything in the taxi. I have not tried so cannot say what is the fine or penalty for violating this. I have travelled quite often in taxis mostly to with mariox or going to her place at other times I availed the taxi once I was getting late for my work and this time the driver was a sikh otherwise mostly they are local white. The passenger generally addressed them as driver, there are no carrier overhead for luggage rather there is enough space in the cab to place your luggage. Neither I have seen anyone sitting in front seat with driver at least in black cabs. The meter is the working mode for payment, I remember on before Christmas I had to take a taxi to reach the university for

attending a lunch and taxi took me from Bellshaugh court to University through Byres road and fare was over four pounds and driver returned me a pound saying'sir general fare is three pounds ,I brought you from a long route'.In queen Margaret residence there is a free phone all you have to do is to pick the receiver and press the button and a lady response and you tell her I am at QMR and needs a taxi and she will ask to where and you answer the palce and that's all,within ten minutes there would be a taxi,the drivers generally don't engage in conversation but if you do they response.fare is paid by pushing the amount through the window partition between the passengers and driver and balance is also given through the same pattern.Where I worked in camphill there are BMWs and there are also taxis parked,the point to bring home is that taxi drivers live as comfortably as any other,there is one person who owns a red Skoda private cab ,myself and he has never talked yet we have a bond because we have been seeing each other for over four months.I cannot say anything about the age pattern of cab drivers,however to drive black cabs one has to pass a special driving test for others one needs a driving licence which should be two years old.I have talked to Pakistani taxi drivers about how good or bad is the income.The general opinion of both was that recession has caused a slump in peoples habit of travelling in cabs,previously almost everyone used to travel even for a kilometre but not now,the cabbie from Mirpur further

narrated that in good old day he used to charge the money more than the fare especially at night but not now, the other driver who is bit old and has been driving taxi for a decade, told me that it is better to rent or work for a company rather than owning a cab of your own.

Now about the buses, there are many types of buses but most common are the double deckers and long buses other types are small buses which are called city sprinters. Bus stops only at bus stops and it moves only in specific lanes. You stand at bus stop which are in abundance and consist of a shed and a sitting bench, there are advertisement in every bus stop which is in the form of a screen which displays anything from a movie to panty wear. All buses have a computer screen in front of them which displays the number and destination, I forgot to mention that in majority of the bus stops the times are displayed and timmings of buses as well. The bus stops and its doors opened which are automatic and controlled by the driver, buses have low clearance, first the people disembark and then people climb although there is a partition and it can be done simulatanously also. You climb the bus and there is paying box in which you drop the fare which is standard one pound twenty pence for one way, the whole day fare consist of three pounds and fifty pence, thus you can travel all day, the driver press some buttons and a printed ticket comes out, the catch point isd that you have to drop the exact fare and no change is given. The frequency of buses is

quite sufficient I have seldom seen a bus crowded even in early hours. Many people have passes which I have not seen closely but there are exemptions to pensioners and school going children. Within the bus there are seats reserved for disabled and old people and also ample space for mothers and fathers with prams, the buses have provisions for disabled and drivers do lower the platform at bus stop for their convenience.

When I first travelled on bus I had no idea about these things and I was also unaware that bus does not stop at every stop and you have to press the button to make it stop at the stop. In retrospect it was fun because I seldom bothered to know which bus goes where thus I will ask the people about the bus numbers and it seldom worked because in Glasgow city centre different buses stops at varying roads, I really had to spend hours rushing from one stop to the other to catch the bus which I was looking for. In the beginning I was travelling to Pollockshaw area. I still remember one fine morning when I was looking for the bus in city centre and there was a woman who guided me and when I said 'let me get the change' and bus was approaching she handed me one pound for fare.

More about the black taxis, by the end of my year long stay I simply refused to travel in any other taxi other than these taxis and my reason for travelling in taxi was mainly because I more than often was getting late

for my work at camphill mainly due to my own laziness.yesterday on 26th September 09,I was again late and near central railway station there was a queu of taxis ,they wait in turn for their number ,the taxi in front was a van type Peugeot ,I approached the black taxi which was next in line and told him that I just want to travel in his taxi ,he apologised and said I cannot as this is not his turn ,I replied 'ok I wait ' and sat on the bench ,I think he was stunned ,he walked to the front taxi and talked to him meanwhile a passenger approached and sat in the front taxi thus matter was resolved and I sat with him,we talked, his daughter was starting her first year in the Glasgow university from Monday,I told him about myself and we chatted .reason for such a loyalty to these black taxis is not eccentric rather they by their conduct has made such an impression that one feels totally at ease.I recall one night in February when I made a committtment with Catherine that I will come to the shawlands on Friday to listen her to music,I lost the way and had no money other than a lone pound,for hours I walked and walked in a semi circular way ,there was no way to ask any one where is the city centre,finally I saw a non regular taxi ,I approached him and inquired if he can just give me the direction to the city centre,he gave me the direction and also invited me to sit in,I told him that I don't have money,he said its ok,any way by the time we reached the city centre he asked me to pay ,I said I had only a pound ,he got angry and said 'I am not

running a taxi on charity' I was taken aback but kept quiet and took it as another day of the life.On the other hand a few days later I was going in a black taxi from City centre after working in a pub ,I had around six pounds and by the time we reached great western road abeam Hilton the fare was approaching so I told the driver to stop,he was quizzical as I had earlier told him that I am going to Queen Margaret ,I explained to him that I am now getting short of money,he replied 'well I am not leaving you in the mid of road at this wee hours'and drove me to my residence at no extra charge.

Everyone cannot drive these black taxis one has to pass a special kind of exam to get the licence in which primarily the candidate has to be thorough about the city .I once had a long chat with the driver ,he updated me on the procedures,there are presently around fifteen hundred black taxis operating in Glasgow and no new license has been issued in last ten years thus old taxis with licences are hot commodity and are being sold in the range of £30,000.He further narrated how an Indian man has bought one in this price range,he was confident that this guy has made a good deal.There are new versions of black taxis on road ,one can make out the old and new model ,it was Tom my security supervisor who educated me on this aspect while we would drive back from work through out the year,The new versions has some added features like ramp for disabled persons which by law all taxis are bound to have.

Train system here is also efficient,I for long was reluctant to travel on them on long journeys and long journeys were mainly between Glasgow and Edinburgh which I had to undertook for two reasons one was connected to my b research with my dissertation and other was in getting the French visa which by itself was an ordeal.I was informed by Chhong my class fellow

Opening of Bank Account

In Pakistan at least a couple of years ago opening of a bank account was an easy affair all you had to do was to walk in and after half an hour you had a bank account and you could have opened another bank account within another hour or so,I myself had bank accounts in almost every city of Pakistan in which I served and that totals around a dozen.Before coming to Scotland I had some difficulty in opening of bank accounts as now they required the identification number of mother card as well and two people who can verify your statement and data,it was cumbersome yet I had no idea what is in store for me in Glasgow

When I landed in Glasgow I had two bank drafts ,one in the name of university and other in my self,both drawn on Royal Bank of Scotland.After few days I went to open a bank account and I thought it should not take few

minutes and with this idea I walked into the royal bank of Scotland 's branch on Byres Road.The branches here are small and not crowded,they have lot of promotional advertisement posters and there is no guard on the gate and neither they have huge offices with reserved car parking etc etc.There was one lady receptionist who very politely and in Scottish accent asked me the purpose and then inquire do I have any appointment ,to which I replied ,negative and after checking certain computers she said 'the earliest appointment that I can fix for you is after a fortnight' I was stunned,what do she mean by appointment and what this fortnight,this is not how I have been living in Pakistan,there I should have been able to open the account by now.i left the branch and after some distance I ventured into another branch this time of Bank of Scotland,same story but only time was little less.

I on given day reached the branch by an hour late and was given a fresh date,this was another lesson for me,I have always taken an hour or day plus in these matters as normal but it was now different ball and game,thus next time I reached well in time and at exact time I was met by a lady and she took me in her office and than she filled all the data on her computer,the main emphasis was on my identification that was passport,my university identity card and then she told me that they will send a letter to my residence and after receipt of that letter I should come back and then my account wil be open

It happened as she told and then again I went and was issued with a cheque book and and a debit card as well.Now something about the credit card.Its not easy to have a credit card and after the exercise I went through I feel that people who have credit here are as important as people in my country having arms license.I was asked few questions and all these were fed into the computer and it is computer who finally judges whether I should have the card or not,in my case the computer said No.

The bank regulatory sends me the statements and other data as well,it also adds profit on it on regular basis.

It was also same in my country where in good old days a bank manager was taken and regarded as a honourable and a man of status but now it different ball and game,here it is not easy to open a bank account rather one has to fullfill a lot of requirement.yet once a bank account has been opened then it acts as a kind of identity card,it is as important.

Transport System of Glasgow

This city like any other any European city has a good transport system,infact no captialast country or any city can survive without an effective system of transportation,people must be able to go and come back from there work without any hassle,it should be able to

handle all burden of people in a way that it should bring them to and back from work in a happy mood.

I had no idea of how it works and here is how I learnt to cope with it. My university is within walking distance from my residence and although there is a university transport system that operates at night between students residences and campus ,I came to know about its existence almost after four months of stay and from this one can imagine how I cope with city system. My first interaction with the buses happened after a week but before that I had undertaken a ride on taxi so I think I first write about that. There are two types of taxis one is classical black taxi and the other are private taxis mostly Peugeot and Vauxall they are big in size and mostly in black colour, the third are more private in nature the Skoda, they are sedan in various colours but they display license prominently marked at the front and rear. Almost all taxis are radio operated, the black ones have a yellow indicator which if it is lighted means that taxi is available and you can wave your hand and it will stop but mind you unlike in our country it will not stop at all places but there are designated places where it will stop, there are taxi stops and parking areas, one thing is similar to Pakistan if the taxis are standing in parking area than you have to sit and avail the first one and not the next one. The taxi interior is as good and smell as fresh as a new one, you cannot smoke, drink or eat anything in the taxi. I have not tried so cannot say what is the fine or

penalty for violating this .I have travelled quite often in taxis mostly to with mariox or going to her place at other times I availed the taxi once I was getting late for my work and this time the driver was a sikh otherwise mostly they are local white.The passenger generally addressed them as driver,there are no carrier overhead for luggage rather there is enough space in the cab to place your luggage. Neither I have seen anyone sitting in front seat with driver at least in black cabs.The meter is the working mode for payment,I remember on before Christmas I had to take a taxi to reach the university for attending a lunch and taxi took me from Bellshaugh court to University through Byres road and fare was over four pounds and driver returned me a pound saying'sir general fare is three pounds ,I brought you from a long route'.In queen Margaret residence there is a free phone all you have to do is to pick the receiver and press the button and a lady response and you tell her I am at QMR and needs a taxi and she will ask to where and you answer the palce and that's all,within ten minutes there would be a taxi,the drivers generally don't engage in conversation but if you do they response.fare is paid by pushing the amount through the window partition between the passengers and driver and balance is also given through the same pattern.Where I worked in camphill there are BMWs and there are also taxis parked,the point to bring home is that taxi drivers live as comfortably as any other,there is one person who owns a red Skoda

private cab ,myself and he has never talked yet we have a bond because we have been seeing each other for over four months.I cannot say anything about the age pattern of cab drivers,however to drive black cabs one has to pass a special driving test for others one needs a driving licence which should be two years old.I have talked to Pakistani taxi drivers about how good or bad is the income.The general opinion of both was that recession has caused a slump in peoples habit of travelling in cabs,previously almost everyone used to travel even for a kilometre but not now,the cabbie from Mirpur further narrated that in good old day he used to charge the money more than the fare especially at night but not now,the other driver who is bit old and has been driving taxi for a decade,told me that it is better to rent or work for a company rather than owning a cab of your own.

Now about the buses,there are many types of buses but most common are the double deckers and long buses other types are small buses which are called city sprinters.Bus stops only at bus stops and it moves only in specific lanes.You stand at bus stop which are in abundance and consist of a shed and a sitting bench ,there are advertisement in every bus stop which is in the form of a screen which displays anything from a movie to panty wear.All buses have a computer screen in front of them which displays the number and destination,I forgot to mention that in majority of the bus stops the times are displayed and timmings of buses as well.The

bus stops and its doors opened which are automatic and controlled by the driver,buses have low clearance ,first the people disembark and then people climb although there is a partition and it can be done simulatanously also.You climb the bus and there is paying box in which you drop the fare which is standard one pound twenty pence for one way,the whole day fare consist of three pounds and fifty pence ,thus you can travel all day,the driver press some buttons and a printed ticket comes out,the catch point isd that you have to drop the exact fare and no change is given.The frequency of buses is quite sufficient I have seldom seen a bus crowded even in early hours.many people have passes which I have not seen closely but there are exemptions to pensioners and school going children.Within the bus there are seats reserved for disabled and old people and also ample space for mothers and fathers with prams,the buses have provisions for disabled and drivers do lower the platform at bus stop for their convenience.

When I first travelled on bus I had no idea about these things and I was also unaware that bus doesnot stop at every stop and you have to press the button to make it stop at the stop.In retrospect it was fun because I seldom bothered to know which bus goes where thus I will ask the people about the bus numbers and it seldom worked because in Glasgow city centre different buses stops t varying roads,I really had to spend hours rushing from one stop to the other to catch the bus which I was

looking for. In the beginning I was travelling to Pollockshaw area. I still remember one fine morning when I was looking for the bus in city centre and there was a woman who guided me and when I said 'let me get the change 'and bus was approaching she handed me one pound for fare.

Diary of a Bouncer In Glasgow

CAMBUS LANG 8TH MAY 09

Cambus in gaelic which is the old scottish language spoken in highland means a torrent of wild rirerne and lang was a saint who erected many monastries, thus cambus lang. It is in south larnakshire in Glasgow and here is a pub smith and jones where I had my first job as door supervisor.

I had the money and I was living comfortable in an ensuite apartment of university in great western Road. Yet there was a an urge to work and I did my security course and for over six month worked in all secure security as patrol or state guards in camphill residential area. For the reason that I was being

paid pound50 a night and two nights a week was good enough for me to pay my bar bill

We all have encounters with bouncers I had few one in new york and two other here in Glasgow. One night I was not allowed in viper club on great western Road. Of no reason. I normally dressed up in military way ie tie and suit and yet I was not allowed, the other incident I don't remember where happened.

Even in talks with my university fellows I come to know that almost everyone hates them for obvious reasons as he is the sole authority which can allow you to enter a pub or can simply ruin your pleasant night ,a bouncer can diminite you in front of your girl friend and probably he is the only authority on these islands whose orders cannot be challenged in any court thus he is the most powerful person in United Kingdom

In Scotland there were no boncers couple of years who were traimeed prinality in my any club which is a private property the oowner has the right of admission and since all his earning depnds upons the people coming in and having a good time this necther he wants to rarnis his image and nuther you want to go to any club where you are not sure of your safety.

This is where door supervision comes in to judge people whom he should allow to come in make sure that there is no threat to ensure meib inside the club generally maintain peace and order yeh he has no legal power of any sort he is not a policeman he is first a door man and that all yet it is at point of entry into the club, that he has maximum power powers which are more than the overs of prime minister; he can simply say not allowed and that's all o discussion nothing your prestige has been but down tour ego damaged and tou canot do anything. Where as the prime minister act can be challenged in court or parliament your is not now lets start from where at all started the time when a bouncer arrives at the company I was and still works with upfront security located on west george street I from residence look a bus and got sown n the city centr, since I am not familiaq with the layout of the city so generally I referece point and walk to the officer at around 1900 hours, I drin up the staids in my black suit a day before I was wid that I should have a black shrit also which I brought for ...10.00 and a tie of the company. I wear black leather sole shoes with studs under it and I smoke pipe. As I opened the door I see three fine bounce silting all aferica immlragtis few asian sance students and few natives also.

I like craig who is support marriage and gereumly the working eniorment séance sates factory yet it was clear to me that it lake professionation in a sense that they have called the bounces yet they are not sure of where to saind them. Since it was my first day so I frist kept enjoying the feeling. Soon I was told that I will be going to combusing; and one of the campany person look me in this car and dropped me there I very well remember the drive as he drove very fast and I did ask hut the question I have you ever take part in a rall and I think he enjoyed this and said no but he looks forward to it.

This puts is in a good location not on the man road having a bast carpark in front. I saw obliko an African of mind forties in sweatation and b lack tris as the other bouncer I was disappointed; in a way that why the clerss lades in not being followed (the wherent military officer in me) yeh 2kept quite and understood that today is my first day thus I should act as a junior. He was findl he look me inside the club and introduced to me the manager I signed the register in which enter my nace SIA licence member and the time. Dbollo showed me the layout of the club, the fire exits the toilets; make bouncer is not allowed to go to a ladies washroom.

The pub is a large pub with a wooden counttire behind it were the bolltes of liquin seating arrangemts of high chair, sofa seats flat screen TV and a small dance floor with a DJ.

The cround was a nix some eldealy floks some very young but orver Lt some middle ages few lonely mean but majority is couples or in groups. The highlight are definalety the girls who were in flashy dresses few were in jeand and lone tops. I know that every one is watching me and judging me.

I stood out with obthlo people were coming in but not in a great member. Obtlo would open the dor for every one which I failed to understaid why become this not part of job but I did not asking wahy. People would also comeout ot smoke as smoking is not allowed inside and this is the real part because you talk to their they latle to you as long as their cigrelle larts you long as their ucgarelle larts you hear convercation you joke they joke. People in Scotland or in Glasgow are very friendly indeed they talk they love to talk.

There wa a women who come out to smoke and asked for a lighter and later she

revealed that she is about to get married and its kind of her party. She asked me about myself and I lor her I am a student of war shiches and har atlilude shugied and she started on servies subjects well she wnet in and till half part traves she admilled of her jeans of marriage as she had been living atine and independut and now she has to readjust then there were two women and one of than asked me who is the prillist of them and I saind the elde ine and the youfact saind she is my mother and I said she looks younger than you I load laugh and nother was happy daughter who was in her mid this ties then told me how she got looked on to drugs and I admitted the same for lash and we become friends.

Obbotol remaind bring in his mobile and later and me that he is already working as a remrity guards or the other company and thus right now he is at two place at sametime. He sand I have to cover him up as he would be gone for the hours and I agreed. He also Glasgow and other one at Norway and ater this I had lot of respect for him he also promnted me to give my lete phone member to the lady but I aclmied of my bring sky ihn this field.

Inside I requested DJ to play my fovrite gogs which he did and I thourghty enjoyed the muse than the nht ended with both girls lassing and

language and that all I know that I wount be able to see then again dadness. Now inside the girls on the comter also came out for sm oke and later revealed that she works in an offcer in day time and workes here in the evening ad I felt so ashamed of myself in fornt of her she said that she own's a house a car and ha boyfriend as well. She has been working in erusie steps for oever three years and I asked her hono was that experience how she used to line on ship and so many other question and she gave me lot of information on this subject.

There was another girls in her leave how was excited because tomorrow she was getting her council house and she asked me if I am married and then joking asked would I marry erh then there was an erlerely women in the puts whose son was in army and Iraq.

That was the first night went there second time next day and it was the day of celtic is p[ragers match and I my first enconted of pub violmece when one man who incat had two other friends hit ine man with his head the group feering and shoulign at each other fnally police was called and club was closed at 2100 hours.

My next assignemtn was a (tiger tiger) club on Gifford street. Here we were there bouncer and the heas was a real professional because he did not gave me even a pipe break this was a much much bigger club of the storeyed woth a basement there were three parties going in tow were birthdays and two tere hen party which are girls parties before their marriage night.

I was made to stand on the dance floor nd I enjoyed the music the DJ was the best that I he sian in Glasgow so far.

A word about DJ's I think hey hve the best job they can drink they can dance and the play music of own choice and fell people happy by playing their favirtie music in the club I with my own backgorin and experience see thepeople hono they reacht behave hono girls intact how male egousn and chounosim is inflated and offended. Hono the evening progress, how ligquon affects the people what happens at the end. Because I am the only one who can stare it them who can walk with full freedom to any part of the put or club who can talk with any one. None know that my fect are aching or I an dying if thirst or what is my feeling towrds them I can understand how people feel towrds me because of my couour my height and my mostaches I

have never been photographed so much as in these pubs and clubs and never before so many women have touched my long moustache in fact the only women before was my wife.

I as an outsider to this city was and is fully understandable how my bearing and my conduct can change people's attitudes and impression about people from my part of the world.

We all are nationalists by heart its other name of racism but we don't admit it. In the pubs and clubs I had lots of discussions and talks with people on various ranges of topics the very fact that I was a post master student of war studies brought many people to come out with their version of great war. In the LastPost pub in Paisley where I went for work, there was one person who invariably spent the whole time with me coming out with me to discuss his version of second world war. Majority of British people and especially men have very limited knowledge of the great war it is really amazing to see how a modern country has deceived its own people in the name of principles the standard theory of all of these people revolve around the treaty which Britain had with the Polish and how manly it is to uphold the treaty at any cost, similar are their thoughts about the first great war but here they do

concede that it was imperial war involving all the related kings and czars.

At the same pub I had talk with three women all elderly who had just arrived from Spain with their three bags and they told me that they had gone there to purchase cigarettes from duty free as it is more economical to buy them at Spain and also to have holidays. This pub is now in the same building which used to be a post office it is now owned by Wetherspoon group a gigantic pub by any standard.

In the same pub I met Christian a petite women who infact said that I am the first bouncer who says welcome and from there onwards, she told me she is mother of eight children and all of them have been taken away by their father due to domestic violence and she has not seen them for a year, now this got my attention and I developed a soft corner for her we exchanged telephone numbers and after a week or so she rang me up and we met in the city, roamed around had a drink and that is it, we both were financially not that very well off to treat each other, she was illiterate and that was the reason that her husband took the children away but I suspect that she had mental illness also but in any case it was another window into the society. Next week

or two she invited me to her town and I went there for the reason that it is very difficult for me to say no to other people and it is one of the key factor that I avoid them. She took me to her flat which was not that very bad it was from the council I bought a pizza enroute we both walk without even touching each other, her flat were two rooms plus a kitchen and a washroom, we ate the pizza and then she put on the television she had the pay movie facility and we watched a movie probably a James Bond thriller and after that she went to other room and I slept on the couch , in the morning I left after having a cup of tea there is reason for narrating all this in such detail because after one week she rang me and as I was busy in my dissertation I declined to meet her, however on the same very day when I was walking upstairs to my flat in thelocation I met two very young girls one white and other an Asian probably from Hong Kong they were sitting on the stairs of the apartment therefore I assume they are students since all they ask for was a cigarette thus I told them that I don't smoke but my flat mates James does so thus they can come in and have a smoke which they did. James is from Nigeria and a very nice guy he was excited to meet them and so were they, James requested me to get some beers from the nearby market which I did however I had left my mobile in the flat, when I came back there was a call from Christine and she was howling like a cat, I failed to understand the whole spectrum but as I went through the

text messages I came to know that these two girls have send obnoxious texts calling her{Christine} an old hen and similar names, it triggered Christine who assumed that its me who is doing all this intentionally and now she also mentioned that when I was in her flat I had passed similar remarks about her and her things and very soon her boy friend is going to be back from the Spain and will teach me a lesson. It took me almost a week to get rid of Christine and these two girls as well .In another wether spoon pub at kilkirmen look I had a conversation with as women by the name of Ann who was at the time of her birth was given away by her mother to a caltotic organisation and she was adoped by family and raised in New Zealand and she still see her real other in dreams she Ann now was a daughter of nineteen, Ann also pointed out that she feels uncomfortable with the way new generation of girls dressed up at this she pointed to a girls in light short and simillamsly Ann herself language adjusted erh loose transparent blouse and said well this is fashion!

